

MUSIC & DRAMA

ROOM

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THE

GRAMOPHONE

MARCH 1959

ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE

VOCAL GEMS FROM

LILAC

TIME

Music by Franz Schubert



**JUNE BRONHILL
THOMAS ROUND · JOHN CAMERON**

**THE WILLIAMS SINGERS
MICHAEL COLLINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA**

HIS MASTER'S VOICE LP RECORD

CLP 1248



Out NOW !

Absolutely free!



IMHOFS "This year of hi fi 1959"

THE YEAR BOOK OF 1959 HI FI EQUIPMENT

with a foreword by Percy Wilson of THE GRAMOPHONE

CONTENTS INCLUDE:

- * DETAILED INFORMATION ON THE LATEST EQUIPMENT. Complete, illustrated list of all the finest equipment with technical specifications.
- * WHAT IS HI FI? WHAT IS STEREO? Clear descriptions for newcomers to hi fi.
- * HOW TO CHOOSE HI FI. Notes on what to look for when choosing amplifiers, tuners, speakers, motors, pick-ups, etc.
- * IMHOFS BUDGET PLAN & CONNOISSEUR'S HI FI SYSTEMS.
- * HOW TO HOUSE EQUIPMENT AND RECORDS. Colour pictures and full details of Imhofs elegant cabinets, specialist installations and maintenance services.

With 36 pages, this exclusive Imhof presentation is lavishly illustrated, beautifully produced and packed with the latest information about equipment and about obtaining maximum pleasure from radio, records and tape. Send for your free copy now. Please use coupon or write to Dept.13, Alfred Imhof Limited, 112-116 New Oxford Street, London, WC1. Tel: Museum 7878.

To: ALFRED IMHOF LIMITED 112-116 NEW OXFORD STREET LONDON WC1
Please send me free copy of THIS YEAR OF HI FI 1959

NAME (Block capitals, please) _____

ADDRESS _____

13

COUPON



Photo by Roger Wood.

NOW IN STEREO!

TCHAIKOVSKY

SWAN LAKE

ERNEST ANSERMET

conducting

L'ORCHESTRE DE LA SUISSE ROMANDE

Ⓢ SXL 2107/8

Ⓜ LXT 5501/2



*Records Magazine—now in a new form.
16 pages of pictures and features. Complete details
of all Decca-group stereo and mono releases.
Full colour. Your monthly guide to good record
buying. Sixpence from your dealer.*

Vortexion quality equipment



Model W.V.B.

Our specialised MONITOR HEAD MODEL W.V.B. has an additional head and amplifier which enables this recorder to perform a number of useful functions. The most important of these is to monitor the recorded tape a fraction of a second after it is made, and if necessary compare it by throwing a switch, with the signal before it is recorded. This allows the recording engineer to make certain that he has made a first class recording before the artists leave the studio, without the necessity of waiting while another run through is made.

Additional items may be recorded one on top of another while listening to the first, since a switch is provided for the erase, and the bias, which also acts as a partial erase, can be lowered slightly, and its new value checked on the meter. In a similar manner the original signal may be fed back and recorded, resulting in an echo, the time constant of which is controlled by the speed of the tape and the distance apart of the heads.

VORTEXION RECORDERS use a synchronous capstan motor to ensure accurate recording and playback speed.

FOUR CHANNEL ELECTRONIC MIXER

This is a studio quality electronic mixer suitable for any climate. The controls are hermetically sealed, and great care and selection of components to make certain reliable low noise operation, and individual screens prevent break through. The built-in power transformer is screened and potted, and all the microphone transformers are individually potted in selected heavy gauge mumetal boxes. Front or rear inputs and outputs may be obtained to order. The normal output is .5 volt.

The 3-CHANNEL MIXER and PEAK PROGRAMME METER is similar to the above but has the additional meter fitted calibrated in 2 db steps from -20 db to +12 relative to l.m.w.—600 ohm. The meter is fed by the full P.P.M. 1 second time delay circuit which includes a stabiliser valve,

Many years of steady development have enabled us to still further improve the Vortexion W.V.A. and W.V.B. recorders.

All components which could contribute to noise or reliability are carefully measured and selected individually before incorporation, resulting in an exceedingly low background noise and distortion with frequency response within ± 1.5 db 50-10,000 c/s and ± 3 db 40-12,000 c/s at $7\frac{1}{2}$ per second.

★ The meter fitted for reading signal level will also read bias voltage to enable a level response to be obtained under all circumstances. A control is provided for bias adjustment to compensate low mains or ageing valves.

★ A lower bias lifts the treble response and increases distortion. A high bias attenuates the treble and reduces distortion. The normal setting is inscribed for each instrument.

★ The distortion of the recording amplifier under recording conditions is too low to be accurately measured and is negligible.

★ A heavy mumetal shielded microphone transformer is built in for 15-30 ohms balanced and screened line, and requires only 7 micro-volts approximately to fully load. This is equivalent to 20 ft. from a ribbon microphone and the cable may be extended 440 yds. without appreciable loss.

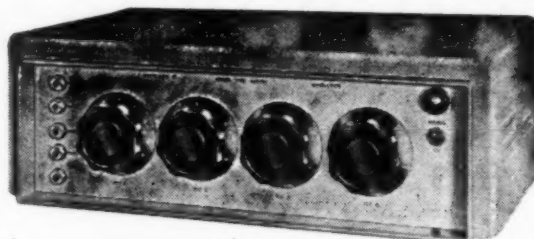
★ The 0.5 megohm input is fully loaded by 18 millivolts and is suitable for crystal P.U.s, microphone or radio inputs.

★ A power plug is provided for a radio feeder unit, etc. Variable bass and treble controls are fitted for control of the playback signal.

★ The power output is 4 watts heavily damped by negative feedback and an oval internal speaker is built in for monitoring purposes.

★ The playback amplifier may be used as a microphone or gramophone amplifier separately or whilst recording is being made.

★ The unit may be left running on record or playback, even with 1,750 ft. reels, with the lid closed.



to ensure accurate gain and calibration. The standard output is screened primary and l.m.w.—600 ohm balanced or unbalanced by switch. Inputs and outputs may be at the front or rear, and rack panel mounting is available at the same price.

Full details and prices of the above on request

VORTEXION LIMITED, 257-263 The Broadway, Wimbledon, London, S.W.19

Tel:phones: LIBerty 2814 and 6242-3

Telegrams: "Vortexion, Wimbledon, London."

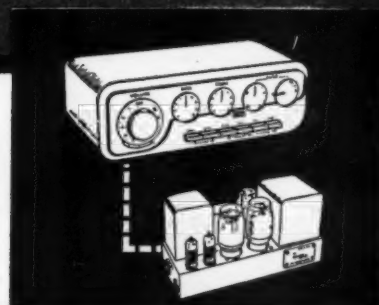
THE
QUAD
22
CONTROL UNIT

*... a new unit anticipating trends
in future listening requirements*



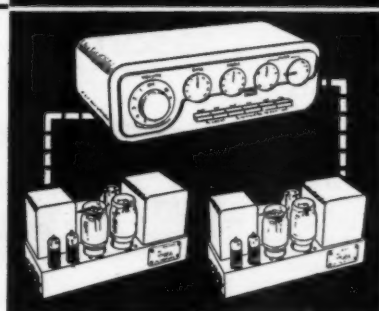
Used with a single QUAD II power amplifier

the unit provides every facility and refinement at present associated with the QUAD II control unit.



Used with two QUAD II power amplifiers,

the unit will in addition accommodate all forms of Stereo programmes with all the necessary facilities for that medium. Whilst providing extreme flexibility—the push buttons for example, provide nineteen different services—straightforward and logical control has been maintained.



A descriptive booklet is now available—free on request.

ACOUSTICAL MANUFACTURING CO. LTD. HUNTINGDON, HUNTS. Telephone. Huntingdon 361

Jason

stereophonic amplifiers

Two models are offered, each of which is part of the Jason Matching Equipment series of amplifiers and tuners, and in which all models are self-powered and uniformly styled for shelf-mounting. Both of the stereo amplifiers may be used for single-channel reproduction, change-over being effected by the front-panel channel selector switch. Both are equipped to operate from radio, microphone, tape pre-amp, as well as all types of standard stereo and single-channel pick-ups. The radio input may be from any one of five different tuners in the matching equipment series.

J.2-10/Mk. II

With pick-up sensitivity of 5 mV for 10 watts output and signal/noise ratio better than 45 dB. Improved variable low-pass filter system; matched ganged controls; stereo balance; speaker phase switch; channel selector switch; compensated input for crystal P.U. Output—ten watts per section in stereo or twenty watts single channel. Input positions for mic., tape and radio as well as magnetic and crystal pick-ups. £37 10 0



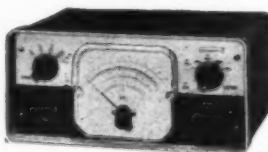
JSA.1

Popular domestic model (illustrated here) giving three watts output per section. With ganged bass, treble and volume controls, stereo balance and input selector switch. Speaker phasing switch at rear. £23 15 0

Jason

instrument kits

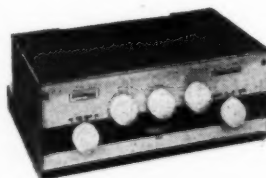
The exacting standards of modern techniques make the possession of electronic test equipment vitally important to the serious constructor and professional worker. Jason meet the demand with a range of instruments of proven performance and reliability, about which full details will gladly be sent on request.



Valve Voltmeter EM.10—with large, clear 4½" scale, with valves and case. £18 10 0.
Oscilloscope OG.10—with valves and C.R. Tube £22 10 0.
Audio Generator AG.10—covers from 10 c/s to 100 kc/s £11 10 0. Built £15 10 0.
Crystal Calibrator CC.10—£14 10 0. Built—£18 19 0.
FM Wobulator W.10—£9 0 0.
Stabilised Power Pack PP.10—with meter £21 0 0. Less meter £15 0 0.
From equipment stockists everywhere. Leaflets on request.

jasonkit

stereophonic amplifiers in kit form.



JUPITER JKSA 10 plus 10 watt power amplifier with seven valves £17 8 0.

PRE-AMP J.4-4. As described in Hi-Fi News. Will operate direct from tape heads (with case and ganged controls) £16 10 0.

JUPITER PRE-AMP J.3-3 with ganged controls and valves £16 0 0.

JSA.2. Simplified complete unit, 6 watts total output. With 7 valves and case. £13 19 0.

Here four self-powered units are offered—a ten plus ten watt power amplifier, two pre-amps and a simpler complete amplifier delivering 3 watts from each half. There are also five different tuner kits matching the amplifiers in appearance, and they include the very successful JTV FM/TV sound switched tuner.

From Hi-Fi Stockists everywhere. Demonstrations in our Showrooms Saturday mornings. Leaflets on request.

THE JASON MOTOR & ELECTRONIC CO. 3-4 (L) GT. CHAPEL ST., OXFORD ST., LONDON, W.1 Phone: GERrard 0273/4

BRITISH DESIGNED TO HIGH TECHNICAL STANDARDS

1964
TOMORROW'S
 1963
Tape Recorder
 1962
is here
 1961
TODAY!
 1960
 1959



During the ten years that have elapsed since we first blazed the trail for Tape Recording an important new Industry has been created. To us it is a matter of pride that so many features of that first Ferrograph have since become standard practice and embodied in the designs of other manufacturers.

To-day we again look to the future and initiate a policy to ensure that—no matter how Tape Recording develops or for what purpose it is used—every Series 4 Ferrograph can be readily adapted at any future time for a variety of applications. To achieve this, space has been provided under the Head Cover to permit Head changes and additions for monitoring, stereo recording, stereo playback, dual track stereo to the new American standard or for lower track use. Such Heads are designed to be plugged in and rocking facilities are provided for azimuth correction.

This Ferrograph development, for example, permits any Series 4A to be instantly converted into a Series 4S merely by plugging in the additional stereo Head costing seven guineas.

In the new Series 4 are several important design improvements such as the resilient mounting of the Capstan Motor, the re-fashioning of the Function Switch Knob, the fitting of a gear-driven Turns Counter accurate to a turn and the use of a one-piece hinged Head Cover. The Brief Stop (or pause control), hitherto an extra, is now a standard fitting on all Ferrographs.

Finally, to conform to our policy of rationalisation, the Ferrograph will be supplied only in one standard colour finish—a handsome two-tone grey. It is available in two forms, either as a transportable or as a chassis unit (without loudspeaker) for installation into your own cabinet, in the following models:—

Series 4A

With standard monaural Recording/Playback facilities

Model 4A/N $3\frac{1}{2}$ i.p.s. 81 gns.
 *Model 4AN/CON $3\frac{1}{2}$ i.p.s. 81 gns.
 Model 4A/H $7\frac{1}{2}$ i.p.s. 86 gns.
 *Model 4AH/CON $7\frac{1}{2}$ i.p.s. 86 gns.

* Suffix CON denotes chassis form for building into own cabinet.

Series 4S

With optional stereo sound playback facilities in addition (when used with Stereo-Ad Unit.)

Model 4S/N $3\frac{1}{2}$ i.p.s. 88 gns.
 *Model 4SN/CON $3\frac{1}{2}$ i.p.s. 88 gns.
 Model 4S/H $7\frac{1}{2}$ i.p.s. 93 gns.
 *Model 4SH/CON $7\frac{1}{2}$ i.p.s. 93 gns.
 Stereo-Ad Unit (when required) 30 gns.

Stereo 88

With full stereophonic recording and playback facilities
 Model 88 $7\frac{1}{2}$ i.p.s. 105 gns.

The Incomparable **Ferrograph**

BRITISH FERROGRAPH RECORDER CO. LTD.

(A subsidiary of The Ferrograph Company Ltd.)

131 SLOANE STREET, LONDON, S.W.1 • Tel: SLOane 1510, 2214 and 2215

A word in both ears...



Avantic



Many music lovers are still listening contentedly to their existing single-channel equipment without being stampeded into replacing it by what they feel to be the costly duplicity of stereo.

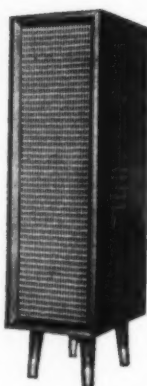
On the other hand, many others think that really good stereo equipment is well worth the extra cost and just can't wait to get in front of a pair of speakers!

We can understand both points of view perfectly, and because of this we have produced a wide selection to choose from. Set out below is a representative range of Avantic equipment for both one and two-channel operation at prices to suit nearly everyone.



**SL12-21
LOUDSPEAKER ENCLOSURE**

This enclosure has been designed, primarily, for use with stereophonic amplifiers of up to 15 watts rating. It contains a 12-inch diameter loudspeaker and a high frequency pressure-unit which combine to give a useful response of 40 c/s to 17 kc/s sensibly flat from 60 c/s to 15 kc/s. 22 GNS.



**SL71
LOUDSPEAKER ENCLOSURE**

This very neat enclosure is ideal for stereophonic reproduction in small rooms. Separate low and high frequency units contained in the slender, solidly built cabinet give a useful response of 55 c/s to 15 kc/s which is sensibly flat from 80 c/s to 12 kc/s. The five-inch legs are detachable. 17 GNS, including P.T.

Other Avantic products include:

L20 LOUDSPEAKER ENCLOSURE

A 3-speaker enclosure with a frequency response of 35-15,000 c.p.s., capable of handling the output of the DL7-35 amplifier. 45 GNS.

PXD33 LOW FREQUENCY LOUDSPEAKER

A 15-inch diameter loudspeaker with a power rating of 25 watts and a frequency response of 20-1000 c.p.s. £28.

CABINETS

The SPA11, SPA21 and PL6-21 Amplifiers can be supplied in our Junior Glyndebourne Cabinet which has provision for a record player or tape deck and storage space for tapes or discs.

The DL7-35 Amplifier can be supplied in our Glyndebourne Cabinet which has space for a record player, tape deck and radio tuner. Both cabinets are solidly built and superbly finished.

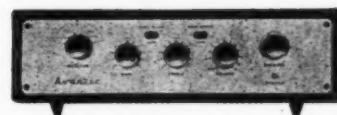
Send this coupon for full details of all our products.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

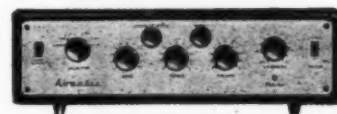
G.7

BEAM-ECHO LIMITED, 13 South Molton Street, London, W.1.



SPA11 STEREOPHONIC AMPLIFIER

This complete twin-channel amplifier with combined pre-amplifier control unit has caused exceptional interest. With a push-pull output stage for each channel delivering 14 watts peak power output and built to the usual high standard of Avantic workmanship it offers exceptional value at 28 GNS.

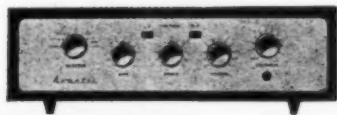


SPA21 STEREOPHONIC AMPLIFIER

A complete twin-channel amplifier with combined pre-amplifier control unit, the SPA21 has twin push-pull output stages delivering 20 watts peak power output for each channel. Fully compensated tape input is sufficiently sensitive to enable direct operation from reproducing head. £48. 10s.

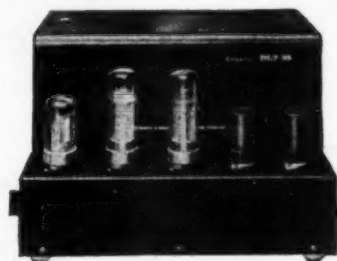
SP21 STEREOPHONIC PRE-AMPLIFIER CONTROL UNIT

is identical in frontal appearance to the SPA21 Amplifier and offers an ideal first step towards stereo conversion. £28. 10s.



PL6-21 SINGLE-CHANNEL AMPLIFIER

This is a combined power and pre-amplifier control unit delivering a peak power output of 30 watts. Fully compensated tape input is sufficiently sensitive to enable direct operation from reproducing head. Full range of controls including high and low pass filters, pre-set attenuator and switched impedance output. £35.



DL7-35 POWER AMPLIFIER

For more than two years the DL7-35 has maintained its position as the finest high fidelity amplifier. Instantaneous peak power rating is 54 watts. Can be supplied with single-channel or stereophonic pre-amplifier. £33.

Telephone: MAYfair 1039. Telegrams: Hibeam Wesdo London.

Monaural ...

a new

4-SPEED

Battery Portable!

**E A R**

Four Seasons

transistor battery portable 16 GNS.

Here, for the first time, is a battery transistor gramophone you really can take anywhere, play anywhere, at a price that's really easy to afford. Despite its small size and low price, in this brilliant new E-A-R design, good looks are coupled with high performance. Available in several attractive colours, the E-A-R "Four Seasons" plays all sizes of records and incorporates matched Transistors, low noise, low consumption, 4-speed motor and high flux, outward facing 7" x 4" elliptical speaker.

It weighs less than 10 lb. and is operated by quick-change U2 Torch Batteries, measures only 14" x 10" x 5".
See and hear the "Four Seasons" at your dealers, or write to us for folder.

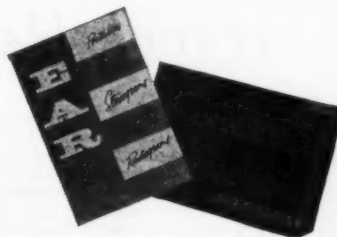


or Stereo ...



Stereophonic sound—with all its vivid sense of space and direction—plus better-than-ever reproduction from ordinary recordings... these are yours with the E-A-R Stereograms. The panels illustrate the Triple-Four—the world's most advanced portable gramophone—the Stereo Library Reproducible, with matching extension speakers, and the Tandem Stereogram with attached extension speakers.

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| 1. E-A-R Stereo Library Reproducible | 39 gns |
| 2. ERP7 Cabinet Speakers
(Vertical or horizontal) | 10 gns. ea. |
| 3. E-A-R Triple-Four Stereogram | 39 gns. |
| 4. ERP7 Speaker | 7 gns. |
| 5. E-A-R Tandem Stereogram | 32 gns. complete |

**ELECTRIC AUDIO REPRODUCERS LTD.**

The Square, Isleworth, Middlesex

Telephone: ISLeworth 6256/8

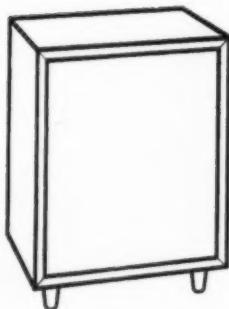
Grams: Microgram, London

There are E-A-R Stereograms from 20 gns. to 65 gns. There are also more than twenty E-A-R Mains and Transistor models for standard records.

Write for free 12-page Stereo Booklet and/or 6-page folder on E-A-R Standard Models.

Stereo facts for the

*serious
listener*

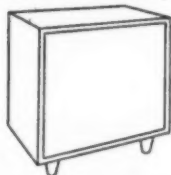


Tallboy—above

Model 351T (Teak) £45
Model 351M (Mahogany) £42
Model 351W (Walnut) £42

Lowboy—below

Model 352T (Teak) £45
Model 352M (Mahogany) £42
Model 352W (Walnut) £42



DU120 Duplex Coaxial FULL RANGE LOUDSPEAKER

£19 10s.



THERE EXISTS in our mind no doubt that the future of high quality sound reproduction lies in stereo.

Some years experience with stereo tapes showed the importance of this medium to the specialist: the release of stereo discs makes a vast quantity of recorded material available to the general listener.

Stereo does not change the requirements for actual quality of reproduction: it adds to that quality breadth, spaciousness and realism.

The choice of a loudspeaker for stereo, therefore, is no less critical than before. There is no magic in stereo: two good loudspeakers still sound better than two poor ones. Whether two poor ones sound better than one good one is, perhaps, a matter of personal preference. For serious listening, the choice will almost be for the one good one.

Satisfactory stereo performance can only be achieved by the use of loudspeakers having similar characteristics. If dissimilar loudspeakers are employed the position of solo instruments in particular will vary with frequency and the true stereo effect will be lost.

The VITAVOX Type DU120 Duplex Coaxial Loudspeaker has characteristics admirably suited to stereo. HALLMARK Loudspeaker Systems incorporate this unit in an acoustically designed enclosure of elegant appearance.

The purchase of one HALLMARK Loudspeaker system now, will enable you to enjoy to the full your monophonic records and radio programmes—the addition of a further one when you have installed a stereo pick-up and amplifier will unfold to you the true potentialities of this new medium.

VITAVOX *Hallmark* LOUDSPEAKER SYSTEMS and DU120 Duplex Coaxial FULL RANGE LOUDSPEAKERS

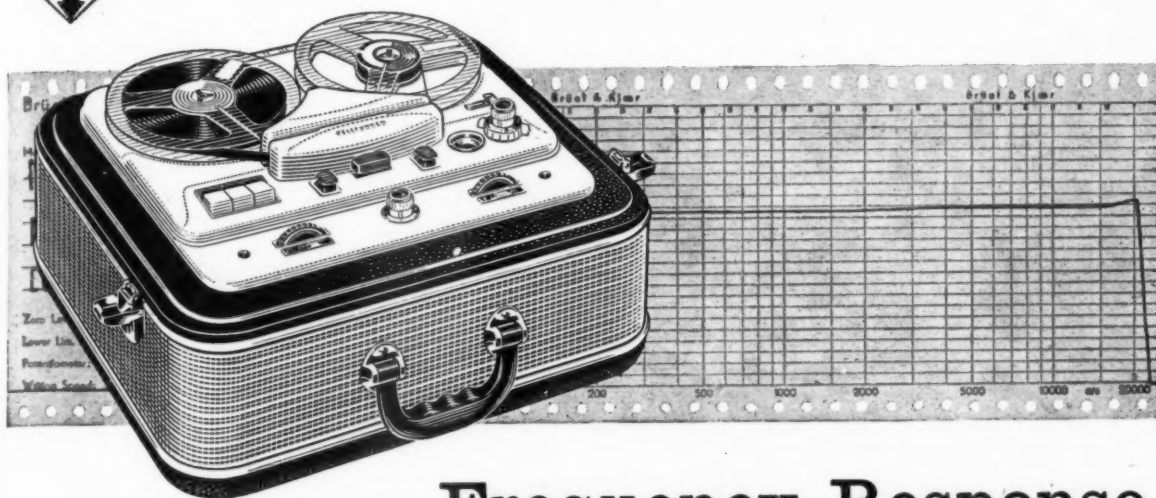


Of the first year's production of the Type DU120 Loudspeaker, 90% were exported, 75% of them to hard currency areas where the choice of the world's loudspeakers is freely available. Your dealer should now hold this loudspeaker in stock but please approach us if you experience any difficulty in obtaining supplies.

VITAVOX LIMITED WESTMORELAND ROAD
LONDON NW9 ENGLAND TELEPHONE: COLINDALE
8671 CABLES: VITAVOX LONDON ENGLAND



With every Telefunken KL85K



Frequency Response is Guaranteed by Certificate!

HERE is proof of Telefunken's confidence in the magnificent KL85K, a certificate showing the actual falling off in dB at the limits of frequency response. The frequency range from 30-20,000 cps at $7\frac{1}{2}$ i.p.s. is guaranteed with ± 3 dB and each model proudly carries the result of its individual test before leaving the factory.

DC heated, pre-amplified valves cut out hum and ground noise. Matched speakers give a tonal quality well exceeding Hi-Fi standards. LF amplifier with treble and bass controls operates separately for straight-through and monitoring work.

Patent automatic tape tension and superfine magnetic heads ensure fullest tape protection. Push-button controls for recording, stop, play back, quick stop, recording-interlock and trick button, etc.

MODEL KL85K

75 GNS. (Excl. Mike)

Testing the KL85K and producing the individual frequency response certificate.



*You are cordially
invited to visit*

TELEFUNKEN

at the 1959

AUDIO FAIR

Demonstration Room

No. 337



*The latest models and
developments will be on
show including exciting
stereo machines*

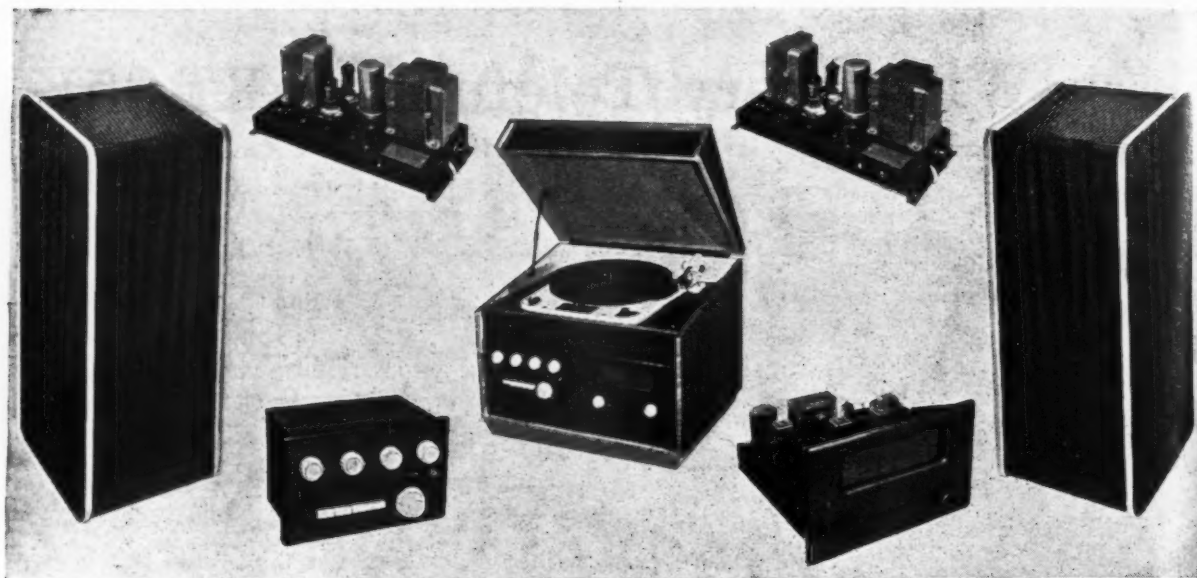
TELEFUNKEN

The originators of tape recording

*Send Coupon for details of the complete range etc.
To WELMEC CORPORATION Ltd., 147 Strand, London, W.C.2*

Name

Address



A complete Home Hi-Fi Stereo System

The composite illustration shows a typical group of equipment forming a complete Stereo System and represents but one of the many Systems, either Stereo or Monaural, which may be built up using standard 'RD' units.

In the System illustrated a standard RD JUNIOR Table Cabinet (B) (£10.10.0d.) is used to house two RD CADET Amplifiers (C) (£10.10.0d. each) together with the RD JUNIOR Stereo Control Unit (D) (£19.10.0d. incl.) and the RD JUNIOR FM UNIT (E) (£25.19.0d. incl.) The Motor Unit is a Garrard 301 Model with Garrard TPA12 Arm, which may be used to house a variety of Stereo cartridges. Alternative Motor Units which may be housed in a standard cabinet include the new Garrard 4HF and the Philips AG2009—an excellent unit at a very moderate price.

If the use of a Crystal or Ceramic cartridge is contemplated then the RD CADET Stereo Control Unit (£12.0.0d.) may be used in place of the JUNIOR model while an alternative to the FM Unit illustrated, would be the new RD JUNIOR Switched FM Unit (£15.17.2d. incl.).

The loudspeakers illustrated are two of the new '1284' 3-way Speaker Systems (A) (£26.10.0d. each) which ideally meet the requirements of practically any domestic High Fidelity System whether monaural or stereo.

★ Available from leading Hi-Fi Specialist Dealers throughout London and the Provinces

Trade and Export enquiries invited

ROGERS DEVELOPMENTS (ELECTRONICS) LTD

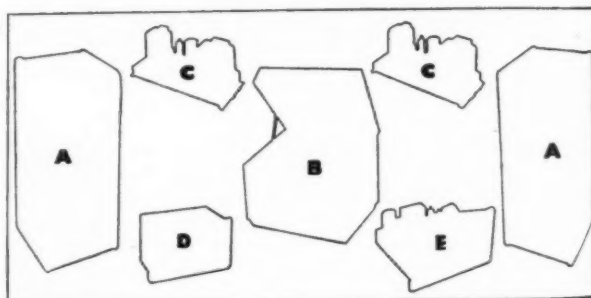
'RODEVCO WORKS'

4-14 BARMESTON ROAD

CATFORD

LONDON, S.E.6

HITHER GREEN 7424/040



RELIABILITY...

An unusually high standard of workmanship, allied to first-class components and materials, ensures long-term reliability; a factor reflected in the unconditional TWO YEAR GUARANTEE which covers every RD Unit made.

ILLUSTRATED LITERATURE

Please send me, without obligation, Illustrated Literature dealing with the items I have indicated below.

NAME

ADDRESS

BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE

G/3

☐ Units for a complete Stereo System

or ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E



LADY VIRGINIA says:

**there's still
time(just)**
TO BOOK FOR THE
BLACKPOOL CONFERENCE
- if you hurry!

**SEND FOR YOUR L/P
CATALOGUE**

3' 6
POST FREE

Full details of membership of the L/P Record Library and what its costs are contained in our Catalogue and Handbook:

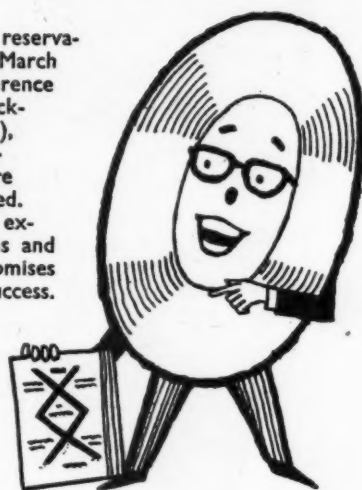
**THE L/P RECORD LIBRARY
(Classical) CATALOGUE AND
HANDBOOK
3/6 POST FREE**

Essential for the record connoisseur. The only comprehensive and selective list of all classical L/Ps well reviewed by critics. Nearly 4,000 recordings listed. Includes sections on: The reproduction and care of L/Ps. A basis for a Record Collection. Groove jumping and repeating. The use of amplifier controls. Full details of Library Membership.

There are still a few reservations available for the March L/P Week-end Conference (Norbreck Hydro, Blackpool—13th/15th March), but immediate application is advisable before the lists are finally closed. Bookings have already exceeded all expectations and this unique event promises to be a wonderful success.

N.B.

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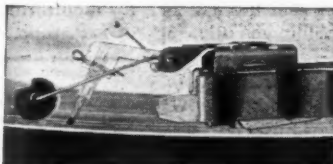
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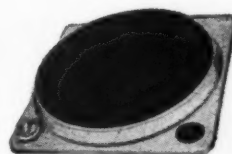
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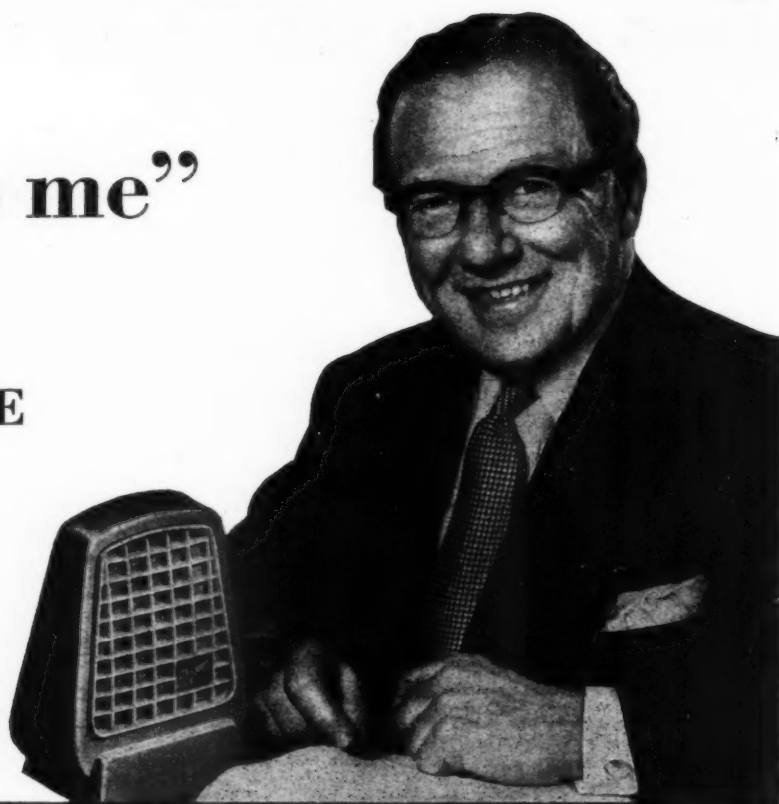
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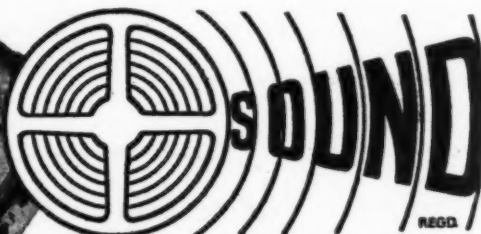
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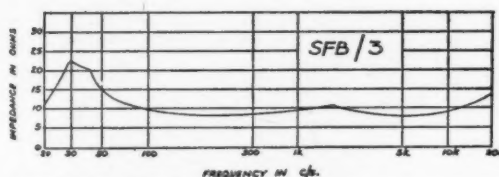
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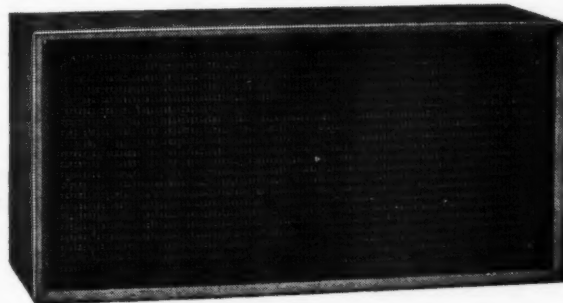
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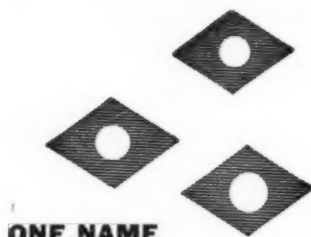
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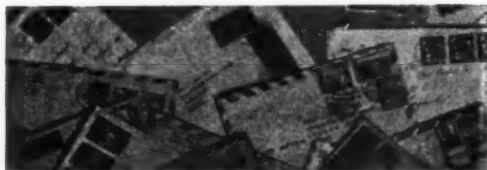
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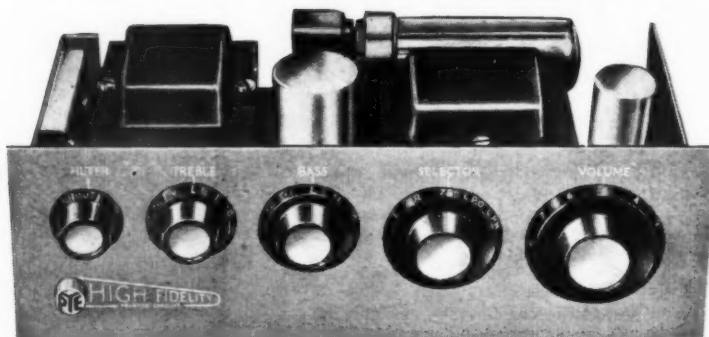
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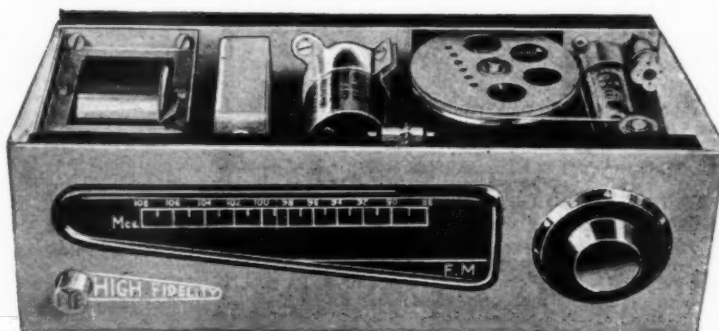


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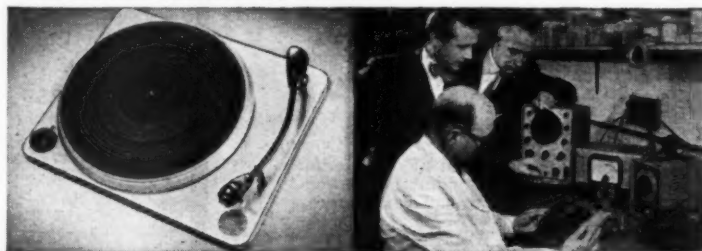
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THE GRAMOPHONE

MARCH 1959 - VOL. XXXVI - No. 430

Incorporating VOX . THE RADIO CRITIC . BROADCAST REVIEW

Edited by SIR COMPTON MACKENZIE

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MAKING A STEREO RHEINGOLD

By JOHN CULSHAW *

It begins, almost a year before the actual production, with the budget and the cast. The budget has to be approved because Wagner is incredibly expensive to record (if you stick to the scoring) and because it is curious that his followers, like Bruckner's, are the least inclined to part with their money when projects about which they have bombarded the record companies for years are eventually realized. *Rheingold* was a risk, and a big one, but it had never been recorded before; if successful, it might be the foundation of a *Ring*; it was the shortest of Wagner's music-dramas, and had the fastest action; it would fit very comfortably on six sides; and it would follow up the critical acclaim we had received for *Walküre*, Act 3. It seemed to be a risk worth taking, if we could assemble the right cast.

Casting is the very devil. Every opera enthusiast can name the dream cast for his favourite opera, and he is fortunate in not having to consider its practicability. Airline schedules, fogs, prior engagements, artistic antipathies, exclusivity arrangements and the rest combine to ensure that by the time you have actually managed to assemble your dream cast, the dream itself will have been modified, either because a new generation of singers has emerged or because you have grown too old to care. Record companies have less reason to compromise than opera house directors who are concerned only with ephemeral performances, and thus their responsibility is greater. It is a quietening thought that one is about to spend a great deal of money in perpetuating a major work. Tchaikovsky symphonies roll off the production lines like sausages these days, but a *Rheingold* or a *Rosenkavalier* has to be either an event or a costly, damaging failure.

We decided to be adventurous in casting *Rheingold*. Thus it seemed right to seek a Wotan who would be discernibly a younger God than is usual in stage performances, where frequently the same singer undertakes the entire *Ring* cycle and thus makes up in consistency for what is lost in dramatic and vocal sense. The *Rheingold* Wotan

needs nobility and power; but he also has to convey the nature of a dilemma vastly different from that in *Walküre* or *Siegfried*, and to emerge sympathetically from the somewhat dubious double-dealings of *Rheingold* calls for acting ability of the highest order. The Wotan who takes so hard and heart-rending a decision at the end of *Walküre* is a much more mature character than the younger God who is only too glad to stand uneasily aside and leave the trickery to Loge. We chose George London for Wotan first because he had the voice and second because he so clearly understood this aspect of the character.

Against him we had to set the voice of evil; and it seemed to us that Gustav Neidlinger was the only Alberich who had ever convincingly managed the difficult transition from plain flirtatiousness in the opening scene through various degrees of corruption to the final, satanic outburst in Scene Four. We had also to find a Fricka with enough authority to develop a part which often goes for nothing, save that of a sort of house-conscious nagging wife. Someone thought of asking Kirsten Flagstad, who had sung Brunnhilde for us the year before. She did not know the part, and while she was looking over it in Oslo the news that we had asked her to do it leaked out to the American press. For a week or two her refusal seemed inevitable; but then she accepted, and turned up in Vienna six months later knowing the part as if she had sung it a hundred times instead of never. Set Svanholm's Loge had always seemed to me his best interpretation, and the rest of the cast fell into place without too many problems: Claire Watson for Freia, since she had led the Valkyries so well the year before; Paul Kuen for Mime because he and Neidlinger were, as they themselves said, virtually brothers; and some of the younger Viennese singers like Waldemar Kmentt and Eberhart Wächter because they had done so well in other operatic projects over the last few years. *Rheingold*, despite its complete lack of ensemble writing, is essentially an ensemble work, in the sense that nothing short of intelligent team-work by the cast can bring it off. There are no conventional major and minor roles, and

each character (with the possible exception of Freia) calls for rather more than the usual amount of development and purely vocal acting. Partly for this reason, and partly because of the success he had made of *Walküre*, we wanted Georg Solti to conduct the Vienna Philharmonic: he has tremendous enthusiasm and energy and is always prepared to give any amount of off-session time to preparation and rehearsal.

When the cast is settled the organization splits in three directions, which eventually merge. First there is the co-ordination of dates, through which the work is spread over an estimated number of sessions and divided according to the availability of artists, hall and orchestra. With so many variables on hand this can be a nightmare, and may itself give rise to slight cast modifications. Second, there is the technical preparation during which the engineers and musical staff concerned get together and decide what special effects are required and how to realize them; and third, the newcomer, there is the planning of the entire opera in terms of stereophonic sound—who moves where, when and why. About thirty sketch plans were needed to cover the various sequences in *Rheingold*, and rehearsing the artists in their movements took care of half of the preparatory piano rehearsals, which totalled twenty-five.

When these activities merge the outline of the whole project should be clear. Artists have committed themselves for a specific period; effects have been tested and found acceptable, at least out of their context; and the stereo production has been drawn out scene by scene, page by page. It appears that nothing can go wrong, but it always does.

There is inevitably one singer whose agent has double or treble booked him, so that in addition to recording *Rheingold* in Vienna he is supposed to be singing Verdi in Hamburg and Puccini in Paris. If there is any truth in the rumour that we have fewer great voices now than in the past, I am sure it is attributable to the combined influence of tone-deaf percentage-hungry agents and faster aeroplanes. There were two such incidents during *Rheingold* though neither came to anything, thanks to firm contracts and the refusal of the rest of the cast to express any sympathy whatsoever. Then there are the incalculable mishaps, like the sudden discovery that a piece of effects machinery cannot be available on the one day you need it; or a decision by

*Classical Artists and Repertoire Manager, Decca Record Company.



General set-up for Scene 3 with Neidlinger and London at extremes of stage

the hall management to cook on Friday for a convention meeting the following Sunday, upon which twenty Viennese chefs proceed to fry *Schnitzel* in the subterranean caverns and thereby half choke the Rhinemaidens, the recording staff and those members of the orchestra still perceptible through the smoke.

Human emergencies can also arise, and did in the case of Lore Wissmann who was to have sung *Welgunde* until she developed illness twenty-four hours before we began the opening scene. Then followed twelve hours of pandemonium while we auditioned and rejected several local singers and telephoned almost every singer in Europe capable of doing the part, and probably several who were not. It was only through the understanding of the Stuttgart opera intendant that we eventually obtained Miss Plumacher, who had been released from her engagements to enter hospital for an appendix operation. Though far from well, she saved the show and sang beautifully, sustained by endless cups of strong English tea and the sort of determination with which good artists are always able to meet a crisis.

The *Rheingold* effects were themselves a major undertaking. It was not difficult for the Vienna Philharmonic to provide

six harps so that the final Rainbow Bridge passage should sound as Wagner wrote it, and not as it usually does in the opera house; but the eighteen anvils written in the score constituted a problem. Eventually one of the hall officials led us to what is known as an anvil school, whose chief was persuaded to hire out eighteen instruments (if you can call them that) of the size and type specified by Wagner. It was then discovered that there were no parts, so the recording crew settled down with full scores and wrote them out. No theatre in Vienna could produce what we considered an adequate thunder sheet, and the credit goes to Linz where a somewhat astonished steel foundry manager met the challenge of his life by manufacturing something large and deep enough to climax Donner's call to the mists towards the end of Scene Four.

Given that action is important in stereo opera (and the critical reception granted to *Walküre* and Puccini's *Fanciulla* suggests that it is), one must then be consistent in getting not only the movements relevant to the drama and specified in the score, but also in creating every sound effect which would be *desirably* audible in the theatre. This is not quite as easy as it seems. The

piling of the golden hoard in Scene Four is an audible sound in the theatre and is therefore a legitimate effect for records. But since an amount of gold large enough to hide Freia in the number of bars Wagner allocates to the operation would be both inestimably expensive and completely unshiftable, the theatre compromises with light wooden blocks painted gold. This is all very well on the stage, where the general picture obscures the falsity of the sound; on records, without the visual element, wood blocks sound like wood blocks and will not do. The sound effect at this point may well be a surprise to those who are used to the usual stage thumps, but it is as accurate as we could make it. (Nothing would induce any Viennese bank to loan its gold reserves, so we had to settle for solid tin, under guard.)

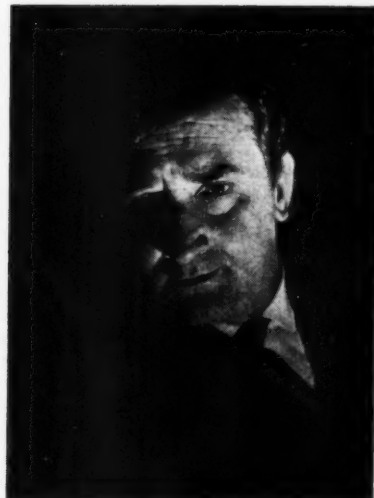
On the other hand, certain familiar theatre noises can sensibly be eliminated for records. We made no attempt to evoke the usual hiss of steam when the dragon appears in Scene Three, since this is not an audible requirement at all and exists only because of ancient theatre plumbing and the old tradition that whenever smoke is seen, steam is heard. But noises like the



George London (Wotan)



Kirsten Flagstad (Fricka)



Gustav Neidlinger (Alberich)



Set Svanholm (Loge)



Eberhart Wächter (Donner)



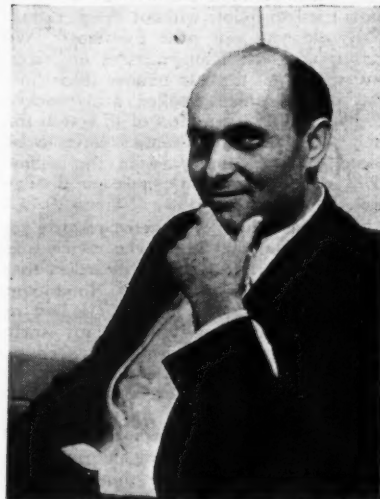
Waldemar Kmentt (Froh)



Paul Kuen (Mime)



Claire Watson (Freia)



Georg Solti (photo: S. Leblanc)

dropping of the Tarnhelm or the moment when Wotan throws the Ring on the hoard are essential to preserve dramatic sense, as are the shufflings and screams of the tormented Niebelungen in Scenes Three and Four. Sixty children from a Viennese orphanage rehearsed in all for more than four hours to get these two momentary screams at the right sonority and intensity.

The stereophonic medium has caused something of a revolution in opera recording technique. One is no longer merely concerned with the correct reproduction of notes and sound, for what has to emerge is a production within a completely new medium, and it has to be conceived as such—as different on the one hand from a broadcast production as it is on the other from the more rigid theatrical conventions. While there are many operatic scenes which gain enormously from the visual aspect of good staging, there are a few which can be better realized on records than in the theatre. There is a moment in Scene Three of *Rheingold* where Alberich puts on the Tarnhelm, disappears, and then whips the terrified Mime, who rushes here and there to escape the blows of his invisible pursuer. This has always been tricky on the stage, because Alberich has only two bars in which to vanish and then must be heard, in a disembodied voice of the utmost menace, as he follows Mime from one side to the other and back again. The use of a megaphone in the theatre puts a hollow sound on Alberich, but inevitably fails to convey the all-pervading, inescapable pursuit. Stereo enables one to do just that with quite frightening effectiveness and without the megaphone. It isn't what you hear in the theatre; but I maintain that for special moments of this sort, where the theatre can be improved upon, the effect is legitimate.

Such moments are, of course, exceptional. Generally, the production for stereo follows the score where the score is explicit, and elsewhere derives from regular theatrical tradition. In the opening scene Wagner wrote specific directions for the comings and goings of the Rhinemaidens, and these we have tried to follow without exaggeration. (Why do you not hear footsteps? We didn't hang the Rhinemaidens on wires, but we did get them to remove their shoes and put on thick woollen army socks.) Perhaps the trickiest effect of all was at the end, when the Rhinemaidens have to be heard off-stage and *doun* in the valley. Wild Valkyries wouldn't make me divulge how that was done.

Sometimes those who make records get the impression that those who review and buy them are not aware of the effort that goes into a major production. No amount of effort, of course, can justify a bad or mediocre result; but it is perhaps worth remembering that *Rheingold* is no exception to the standard of careful preparation which now goes into every stereo opera project, and which has no precedent in recording history. Those who are interested in this particular recording may also like to know that, despite everything, it ended with a crisis, and that the final bars rang

out for the last time at precisely eight minutes past one on the morning of October 10th, 1958. A night emergency session had been called, after which the huge Vienna Philharmonic at full complement trudged home in the early morning hours; and the conductor, recording crew

and what was left of the cast listened to what they had done, were rather pleased with it, and went off at four in the morning to drink goulash soup and talk over whatever might be coming up next.

(The Decca recording of "*Das Rheingold*" is reviewed on page 472 of this issue).



The thunder sheet from Scene 4



Eighteen Anvils in Rehearsal (coming as interludes between Scenes 2 & 3 and 3 & 4)

ROGER HAVERT

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engloutie (both from 'Préludes')
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conducted by John Pritchard

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'Don Giovanni'—*Mozart*;
Crudele? ... Ah no, mio bene! Non mi dir
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CALLAS and DI STEFANO



with Orchestra of La Scala, Milan
conducted by Tullio Serafin

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Act 1—E sempre lava! ... Recondita armonia;
Act 2—Vissi d'arte
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CYRIL SMITH



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Waltz in D flat ('Minute');
Waltz in G flat—*Chopin*; Prelude in G;
Prelude in G minor—*Rachmaninov*
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London Symphony Orchestra

Chanson de Matin; Chanson de Nuit—*Elgar*;
'Tom Jones' Dances—*German*;
Morris Dance; Gavotte; Jig
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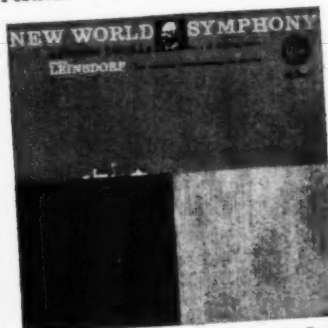


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LETTER FROM AMERICA

By HAROLD C. SCHONBERG

ALTHOUGH Maria Callas has neither sung with the Metropolitan Opera this season (thanks to the now celebrated flare-up of Rudolf Bing) nor been represented by any records here within the last few months she manages to remain in the news. Late last January—a few days before these lines are being written—she appeared in Carnegie Hall with the American Opera Society in a concert performance of Bellini's *Il Pirata*, and it was one of the real events of the music season in New York. The hall was sold out—at \$25 a time; the manager of the American Opera Society knows a good thing when he sees it. Few more distinguished audiences have ever filled the hall. As they say, Everybody who was Anybody, my dear, was there. For their \$25 the audience got an unknown but not very distinguished opera by Bellini, a competently rehearsed performance, a good though undistinguished cast—and Callas. The great lady was greeted with hysterical applause. She responded with demure modesty, downcast eyes and all, and proceeded to give a lesson in how to hold an audience as an entomologist holds a bug on the point of a pin. All through the night it was Callas, Callas, Callas, and nobody took his eyes off her, whether she was singing or fidgeting in a chair. She is the greatest scene-stealer in history. While her colleagues were at work she was shading her eyes with her hands, or whispering to a neighbour, or making delicate little gestures—so carefully unobtrusive in their delicacy that they might as well have been painted in scarlet on a white canvas. *Il Pirata* ends with a mad scene, for solo soprano, and toward the end of the opera the audience was treated to something out of Haydn's *Farewell* Symphony as each singer fled the stage as his or her stint was finished, leaving the diva in solo possession. Whereupon the stage went dark, spotlights hovered around the presence, and Callas proceeded to go mad in quite a satisfactory manner. How did she sing? Well, you won't get me in a discussion of so unimportant a detail.

Otherwise, the operatic news devolves upon the forthcoming new productions by the Metropolitan Opera of *Wozzeck* and *Macbeth*. And in the world of recorded music, there is Angel's new album of Strauss's *Capriccio*, an opera that has never been presented in a major American theatre. In the cast are Schwarzkopf, Gedda, Hotter, Ludwig, Fischer-Dieskau and Wächter, with the Philharmonia Orchestra under the direction of Wolfgang Sawallisch. *Capriccio*, completed in 1941, was Strauss's last work for the stage. It has a strange and talky libretto that concerns itself with the relationship between words and music. As in most late Strauss, there are tender and yearning sections, followed by long episodes where artifice prevails over art. I have never been able to respond to late Strauss, and my opinion of *Capriccio* is necessarily suspect;

but surely those constant reminiscences, conscious or unconscious, of earlier Strauss works represent a kind of sterility and garrulousness typical of the mental processes of many old men. Anyway, the performance sounds like an exceedingly brilliant one. There can be no doubt that few superior casts could be assembled anywhere in the world today.

Two unusually pleasant recordings of lighter stage works are delighting American collectors. The first recording of Offenbach's *Grande Duchesse de Gerolstein* is contributed by Urania on two stereo discs, with Eugenia Zareska in the title role and a cast predominantly French under the direction of René Leibowitz (two discs). I have not been able to see a score and am thus in no position to state whether or not the work is cut in this recording, but can report that the music is pert and bright-sounding, the performance equally so. The operetta is a satire on the French Army. Hearing so pungent a work makes one wonder what has happened to the art of satire. Can it be that our age takes itself too seriously?

The other light work is Lehár's *Merry Widow*, sung to perfection on a pair of London stereo discs by Gueden, Loose, Per Grunden, Karl Donch and others. The conductor of the Vienna State Opera Orchestra is Robert Stolz. Not only is this performance musically ideal, but it also has some stereophonic effects that are breathtakingly realistic. The activity in the last act puts the listener right in the café itself; there is a dimension that few recorded operas can match.

Most of London's other records are stereo transfers or current releases already available in England. Haydn piano music, played by Backhaus, is one of the discs, and it might interest R.F., who reviewed it very accurately in the November issue, to know that the programme notes he admired so much were written by H. C. Robbins Landon.

Nothing very breathtaking is among the current American releases. Victor has two interesting vocal discs, one featuring Cesare Valletti, the other Maureen Forrester. Valletti, accompanied by Leo Taubman, sings early Italian songs, Schubert and Schumann with taste and style. Italian tenors are in bad repute when it comes to song recitals, and deservedly so, but Valletti is one of the exceptions. He has brains, for one thing. His voice, too, is not the tiny instrument it is so often reputed to be. He is no Tamagno in volume, of course, but his voice manages to fill the Metropolitan Opera easily enough. As for Forrester, she is the young Canadian contralto who has been rapidly coming to the fore. She has an ample, beautifully coloured voice that is smoothly produced; and she, too, sings with brains as well as voice. Her disc offers Schumann's *Frauenliebe und Leben*, Brahms's *Zigeunerlieder* and the two songs of Brahms Op. 91, with viola obbligato played by

Otto Joachim. John Newmark is the pianist. Victor also presents another young artist, the pianist Gary Graffman, in a technically brilliant performance of the Brahms D minor Piano Concerto (with the Boston Symphony under Charles Munch) that somehow lacks personality.

Personality is just what Glenn Gould has, and on a Columbia disc the young Canadian pianist is heard in unusually deft performances of the Berg Piano Sonata, Schoenberg's Piano Pieces (Op. 11) and Ernst Krenek's Piano Sonata. Gould, in his own programme notes, hails the Krenek as "one of the proudest claims of the contemporary keyboard repertoire". One does not have to agree with him to salute the mastery of his playing. One might also put in a few words about the quality of Gould's voice. He sings along, as he plays, and that is very much the style these days (cf. Casals, Serkin, et al.). It proves the artists' *raptus* with the music, or something.

Among other young pianists, there is John Browning, making his recording début on a Capitol disc devoted to encores. He was a prizewinner in the 1954 Brussels competition, and he goes through his pieces here with plenty of technique but without much style. On an Angel disc, Geza Anda plays Brahms's F minor Piano Sonata and the three Intermezzi of Op. 111; and this is sending a boy to do a man's work. Anda has nowhere near the resource to hold the music together as Kempff did in his recording of the sonata. (And how so great a Brahms player as Kempff could give us the impossibly affected Chopin demonstrated on three recent Decca discs is one of those mysteries that needs some divine power to explain.)

Capitol, in its E.M.I. series, brings before the public the two-piano ensemble of Vronsky and Babin. These two gifted players have been absent too long from records. They are heard in Mozart's Two-Piano Concerto, and in an arrangement for two pianos of Mozart's Concerto in F for Three Pianos, both scores with the London Mozart Players under Blech. Another E.M.I. Capitol disc features the late Artur Rodzinski, who leads the Philharmonia in Strauss's *Death and Transfiguration*, *Dance of the Seven Veils* and *Dance Suite after Couperin*. The primary musical interest here is, of course, the seldom-played *Dance Suite*—which is not presented in its entirety; the second movement, the Courante, has been dropped (possibly in favour of the *Seven Veils*). Rodzinski, one would guess, was amused by the delicious Strauss orchestrations, and he conducts elegantly.

Of interest to collectors of early English music is an *Experiences Anonymes* disc devoted to catches. It has the rather arch title of *Catch that Catch Can*, is sung by the New York Catch Club under the direction of Saville Clark, and contains music by Purcell, Blow, Lawes and others. This is definitely not the kind of music one would sing in church, nor can an idea of the lyrics be given in a family magazine. But the bawdiness of these catches cannot really be called smutty. They handle *double entendres* in a light-hearted manner, and there is nothing sniggering about them.



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By ROGER FISKE TREVOR HARVEY PHILIP HOPE-WALLACE
MALCOLM MACDONALD WILLIAM S. MANN JEREMY NOBLE
ANDREW PORTER ALEC ROBERTSON LIONEL SALTER DENIS STEVENS



★ indicates a stereophonic recording

ORCHESTRAL

ARNE. Organ Concerto No. 5 in G minor.

HANDEL. Organ Concerto No. 9 in B flat major, Op. 7, No. 3. Albert de Klerk (organ). Amsterdam Chamber Orchestra conducted by Anton van der Horst. Telefunken LGX66077 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.).

The King of instruments is a special musical taste, which you either adore and cultivate, almost to the exclusion of other music, or else tend to accept passively without much enthusiasm, reckoning it, and its musical literature, as something slightly apart from symphonies and opera, and even Beethoven's piano sonatas or Bach's 48. This is my line, anyhow. We all know that Bach's organ pieces can sound as wonderful as anything in music, and that Handel's organ concertos are very enjoyable too, though they too often bawl at you through many multiples of eight feet and all too vivid imitations of road machinery. I started to treat the organ as a musical instrument when I first heard it played in a baroque manner—which was after I had tried my hand at taming the beast for myself, a feat I am still trying to accomplish.

Albert de Klerk, the Dutch organist who plays these two concertos, seems to have made his own compromise. He can thunder away like the best of the road-rammers, and after a session with his record, you are inclined to think him too enthusiastic. But there is no doubt that he has a feeling for eighteenth-century sound of the larger variety—which we know Handel liked—and takes trouble to make his performances sound like music, and not only like the organ.

These performances, which were recorded in the Dutch Reformed church at Loenen, are carefully done; de Klerk uses a greater variety of stops in Handel's "Hallelujah" Concerto (so-called because of its first movement) than the sleeve tells us was Handel's specification for his organ in Covent Garden, but he makes pleasant music, in the softer passages at least. For the slow movement, which Handel was used to improvise, he takes his cue from "Hallelujah" and chooses another movement from *The Messiah*, "How beautiful are the feet", which he decorates and enlarges upon in good taste. His mixtures in the first movement are pretty too, and I liked his treatment of the episodes in the third movement.

Arne's fifth concerto (of six) is one of his special interests, and I gather that he has broadcast all six. This one is harmless, with a charming second movement very reminiscent of "O ruddier than the cherry" in Handel's *Acis and Galatea*. The first movement is a French sinfonia opening, which ought to be double dotted, but isn't. The third is a dull slow, movement, which Mr. de Klerk plays on a nasty nasal stop—is it a Nazard? The keynote is out of tune. The finale is a gigue that outstayed my welcome.

The orchestra seems rather large for this sort of music, but perhaps it felt obliged to keep its end up. The sound is jolly loud, it you want to achieve any impression of vividness, and the strings are rather wiry in tone. But the organ recording is as brilliant in range as any I have heard for a long time. And the Arne is a curiosity that organists may enjoy exploring. W.S.M.

★BACH. Brandenburg Concertos Nos. 1-6, BWV1046-1051. Thurston Dart (harpsichord), Philomusica of London directed by Thurston Dart. London L'Oiseau-Lyre Stereophonic SOL6005-6 (two 12 in., 57s. 6d. plus 22s. 5d. P.T.). Mono: OL50159-60 (5/58), OL50167 (9/58).

I am glad that my complaint about the very peculiar mono coupling of these concertos was taken into account when the stereo issue was planned. We now have all

six concertos on two discs: 60005 contains 2, 1, and 6; 60006 contains 4, 5, and 3. The Concerto in B flat, No. 6, appears to have been re-recorded, with Dietrich Kessler replacing Dennis Nesbitt, and with a steadier tempo replacing the somewhat undignified jog-trot of the mono performance. It is a great pity that the Concerto No. 1, in F, was not re-recorded at the same time with horns instead of the incorrect trumpets, which sound, if anything, worse in stereo than on mono.

Although it is perfectly reasonable to argue that the tone of a corno da caccia was different from that of a modern horn, I still find no justification for transposing Bach's horn parts up an octave. When this is done, the middle falls out of the concertino, and the six instruments—violin piccolo, three oboes, and two corni—move around confusingly in the same register. When horns are used, the interval on which they end their bravura passages, whether a third, a sixth, or a fourth, is faithfully reflected in the orchestral parts at the correct pitch. In the Minuet, horns discreetly play their repeated notes in the middle of the texture; trumpets an octave higher produce an effect which is musically almost nonsensical.

With reservations concerning the first concerto, I would recommend this stereo set of Brandenburgs, for the overall sound is greatly improved even though there is no particular directional emphasis. D.S.

BACH. (a) *Concertos*. No. 1 in D minor, BWV1052: No. 5 in F minor, BWV1056. (b) *Tocatta and Fugue*. No. 1 in G minor, BWV911. Jean Casadesus (piano) with (a) *Paris Conservatoire Orchestra* conducted by André Vandernoot. Columbia 33CX1622 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8½d. P.T.).

BACH. *Partitas*. No. 5 in G major, BWV829: No. 6 in E minor, BWV830. *Concerto No. 1 in D minor for Piano and String Orchestra*, BWV1052. Glenn Gould (piano), *Columbia Symphony Orchestra* conducted by Leonard Bernstein. Philips ABL3234 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

Concerto No. 1:
Foss, Zimmler Sinf. (6/53) AXTL1012
Richter, Czech P.O., Talich (3/58) LPV262
Richter, U.S.S.R. S.O., Sanderling (8/58) PMA1037

Jean Casadesus is the son of Robert and Gaby Casadesus. Bach's keyboard music does not necessarily reveal a first-class performer, but the omens of this record are distinctly promising. This latest Casadesus has a neat, lively touch, a precise mind, some awareness of eighteenth century style (though he sometimes sounds more suited to Couperin and such elegant, *maniéré* composers than to the rock-based graces of Bach, and I wish he would put some extra trills in at cadences), but not the piercing imagination that we hear in the playing of his American contemporary Glenn Gould.

Gould offers less satisfactory value for money, I think; a couple of *partitas* is welcome, but most collectors would probably rather have the two popular concertos, and the C minor *tocatta* as a welcome

fill-up. Casadesus's orchestral accompaniment is the more lively; that on the Philips sounds too heavy. And the French boy has one inestimable advantage; he doesn't sing when he plays the piano. Glenn Gould, with all his perceptive mind and exhilarating touch, is doomed to disaster, and won't earn my entrance fee until I know that he's given up baying the moon with melodies from Bach. In the D minor concerto the strings can cover him; but the two *partitas* are ruined by this melancholy obsessional *vil canto*. Since singing is so good a thing, to misquote Byrd, I wish Glenn Gould would learn not to sing. W.S.M.

★**BALAKIREV.** *Islamey*—Oriental Fantasy.

★**RACHMANINOV.** *Piano Concerto No. 2 in C minor, Op. 18.* Julius Katchen (piano), *London Symphony Orchestra* conducted by Georg Solti. Decca Stereophonic SXL2076 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.).

It is hard to believe that Katchen hasn't a more recent record of the Rachmaninov in the catalogue than his 1951 issue but, mono or stereo, he hasn't. Now he gives us it in a record that should last a long time, not only because of its performance but also for its superbly fine sound. If you play it pretty loudly, as I did, it really does flood the room most gorgeously. Indeed, after the first movement I had to stop and collect my thoughts, which were something like this.

It's a tremendously tempestuous performance and very different, if I remember correctly, from Rachmaninov's own, which always had something aristocratic about it. Katchen's playing is not so clean-fingered (or cleanly pedalled, perhaps) but goes all out for storm and passion. If I may add a plaintive question, need the final *meno mosso* set off at a faster speed, even if Katchen is still capable of making an *accelerando*? Give him his due though: not only does the performance carry you along with its sweep, yet he doesn't hog the limelight all the time but blends admirably with the orchestra when he should. And now, having taken breath, on to the slow movement.

This is very beautifully played, and with a most musical flute solo at the beginning, followed by a finale which, in its way, is terrific. In its way, because I think it can also be played more clearly and yet not lose in passion. Solti accompanies admirably all the way through.

The general sound is outstandingly good. I am only bothered a bit by where exactly Katchen is. At anything below *f* he comes from my right-hand speaker—not a likely place for a piano soloist—but at *f* and above he is well in the centre. I mention this with some reserve, for one of the difficulties of stereo listening is that once you get it into your head that something is coming more from one speaker than the other, you get a sort of one-speaker fixation. Yet I suspect that here I am right, for the orchestra was very well balanced indeed in all its tutti. And this concerto has an easy test right at its start, those chords that *crescendo* from

very soft to very loud: I tried this more than once and each time it seemed to me that the piano suddenly centred itself about half-way through. Perhaps I am going mad—with all this stereo business, I shouldn't be surprised!

Anyway, this is a record to be tried, with its passionate performance (and *Islamey* as an encore) and its fine sound, and you might well decide to risk your money and hang what may come later. T.H.

★**BEETHOVEN.** *Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67. Overture, Leonora No. 3, Op. 72a.* Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by André Cluytens. H.M.V. Stereophonic ASD267 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.). Mono: ALP1657 (2/59).

★**BEETHOVEN.** *Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67. Overture—Consecration of the House, Op. 124.* Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Lorin Maazel. D.G.G. Stereophonic SLPM138008 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

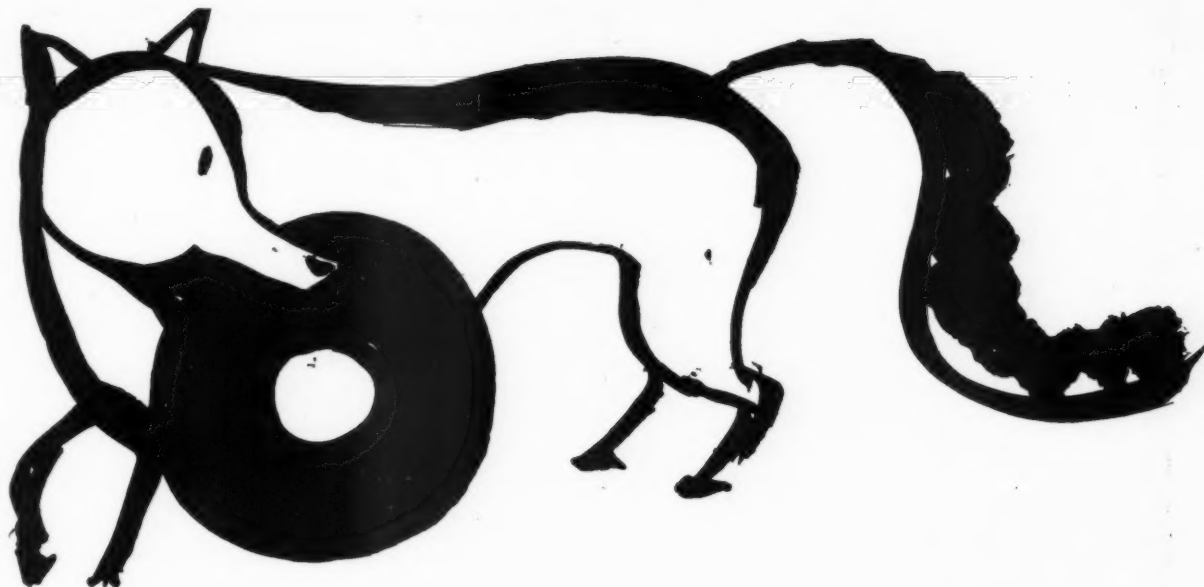
Symphony No. 5, Stereo: (10/58) SXL2063
Suisse Romande, Ansermet

The stereo "5ths" begin to flow in, two this month and both played by the same orchestra. The entirely new one is conducted by Maazel, a hot-blooded performance full of effort to make it the most exciting ever—what one might call a young man's Beethoven. Yet no doubt most of the ideas have been tried before and cast aside. Not that there is any wild extravagance in Maazel's performance, it is merely that he is unwilling to let the music play itself. The nervous tension in the first movement is got at the cost of solid strength, the very opening theme of the slow movement isn't left to sing on its own, the next movement is slightly over fast (Weingartner pointed out that this is not a quick scherzo of the kind found in later symphonies) and the Trio basses sound fussy rather than strong at this speed. "Points" are made here and there all the way through.

Put on Cluytens' record, mono or stereophonic, and the difference is clear. Here is indeed a strong performance and, as I said in my review of the earlier version, this is one of the best things I have ever heard this conductor do. It seeks to make no effects, but by very virtue of its honest strength ends by making a great impression. In its stereo form it is again a success.

I like both these conductors less in their overtures. Cluytens' *Leonora* is played in the main at an extraordinarily slow speed, while Maazel's *Consecration of the House* (a fine piece all too seldom played) is taken too fast, its mere *allegro con brio* sounding like a *presto*. D.G.G.'s stereo sound is excellent (except that the brilliance of the end of the overture, the end of a side, seemed to fall off) and their record has a most satisfying *ff* sound, seldom equalled.

But overtures aside, I have myself no doubt which performance of the main work satisfies me the more—Cluytens—and it is my choice of the three stereo records at present available. T.H.



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TCHAIKOVSKY *Symphony No. 4 in F minor*
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★**BEETHOVEN. Piano Concerto No. 3 in C minor, Op. 37.** Solomon (piano), **Philharmonia Orchestra** conducted by **Herbert Menges**. H.M.V. Stereophonic BSD751 (10 in., 22s. 3d. plus 8s. 8½d. P.T.). Mono: ALP1546 (7/57).

Rubinstein, New York S.A., Krips (1/59) SB2008

Mono or stereophonic, this seems to me easily the most satisfying record of this concerto to be had and I enjoyed the performance again as deeply as when I heard the earlier version. The slow movement is outstandingly beautiful and it is so good to find Solomon's exquisite playing of the opening solo matched in feeling by the orchestra when it enters. This is indeed a most poetical performance from everyone.

The outer movements are good, too, and not least because Solomon keeps their momentum going so well (unlike some of his rivals), while Menges (also unlike some of his rivals) maintains a thoroughly alert and alive accompaniment: yet within this prevailing sense of movement there is plenty of subtle variation. The first movement cadenza, by the way, is by Clara Schumann, a pleasant change from Beethoven's own, even if in the end I prefer the latter.

The stereo sound is excellent, with the piano centrally placed and the orchestra well disposed around it. I have only one criticism and, oh dear, it's one we have to make so often. After the concerto's soft string start, why must the sound of the answering woodwind be so near? When, later on, the full orchestra is playing, the woodwind are perfectly clear, yet they are kept in perspective. They should have been left in the same perspective at the concerto's start. I have remarked on this elsewhere this month (Vox being the culprits) and it is important to go on complaining about this until the companies take notice, lest in the end our ears get used to something that just isn't true and come to accept it.

But to make a fuss about a few bars, even if necessary, is to complain about something of very small importance when the whole of this admirable record is being considered. It is indeed a wonderfully satisfying performance.

Two notes. The 10-inch format is accounted for by the omission of the Piano Sonata, Op. 54, which was included on the mono issue: and, as a matter of news interest, Decca have announced the appearance shortly of a record of this concerto by Katchen in both mono and stereo versions (LXT5500 and SXL2106). T.H.

★**BEETHOVEN. Piano Concerto No. 4 in G major, Op. 58.** Emil Gilels (piano), **Philharmonia Orchestra** conducted by **Leopold Ludwig**. Columbia Stereophonic SBO2752 (10 in., 22s. 3d. plus 8s. 8½d. P.T.). Mono: (4/58) 33C1055.

Backhaus, V.P.O., S.-Isserstedt (10/58) SXL2010
Rubinstein, New York S.A., Krips SB2017

M.M. gave the monophonic record of this performance a welcoming notice and I can now do the same for it in stereo form. The sound is certainly good, well balanced and in general a pleasure to hear. M.M. remarked that the strings at the start of the

finale were absurdly distant, but here, though they are indeed very soft, they don't strike me as being impossibly remote.

As to choice between the two stereo performances at present available, that will be very much a matter of personal taste, for they are very different. Gilels gives a quietly poetic account of the work, a more personal reading than Backhaus's. It is beautifully played and full of sensitivity. Backhaus, with his well-known "classical" approach, gives the music at times a greater strength and nobility. It would be nice to own both, one as a corrective to the other. T.H.

BEETHOVEN. Overtures. Prometheus, Op. 43: Fidelio, Op. 72. **Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Jascha Horenstein**. Vox VIP45280 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3½d. P.T.).

This version of the *Prometheus* overture was included originally in an unsatisfactory LP of four Beethoven overtures, now withdrawn. In its new format it remains a not particularly sensitive performance, rather poorly recorded. Even so it shines beside the new version of *Fidelio*; for this gives not so much a rather poor as a quite execrable recording to what sounds in the distance like a distinctly lack-lustre performance. To add to the gaiety of the situation the review copy of the record was badly centred and wrongly labelled. M.M.

BLACHER. Variations on a Theme of Paganini, Op. 26.

VON EINEM. Capriccio for Orchestra, Op. 2.

MARTIN. Petite Symphonie Concertante. Gerty Herzog (piano), Sylvia Kind (harpsichord), Irmgard Helms (harp). All with **Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Ferenc Fricsay**. D.G.G. DGM18494 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

So far as representation is concerned, this disc may be said to centre on Boris Blacher, since he has a work of his own here, one by his pupil Gottfried von Einem and his wife as the pianist in the third. But musically the limelight is stolen, without any effort, by the Martin: what an original, haunting and effective masterpiece this is! Nevertheless, the novel combination of sonorities—two string orchestras with the three *concertante* instruments, as well as a number of string solos—poses formidable problems of balance, however meticulously all the players adhere to the composer's carefully planned dynamics. Indeed, it is really only with the aid of microphones (i.e. for radio or the gramophone) that the two weaker-toned solo instruments can avoid being swamped by the pianoforte, and even then the relative levels may have to be unobtrusively adjusted during the performance. (This may sound like heresy to the one-microphone, switch-it-on-and-leave-things-alone school, with which I generally have complete sympathy; but personal experience of this work in the concert-hall has convinced me of its necessity.) The balance here is carefully and quietly

"fiddled" in such a way as to bring up the *Hauptstimme* or main part without drawing attention to the fact; and except in the last movement, where the harpsichord is too faint, this is successfully done. But I should have preferred a far cleaner sound, as in the Decca version (LXT2631), and this performance, though efficient, is not as poetic or exciting as the earlier one.

The Blacher variations—vivacious, cheerfully extrovert music—mostly use isolated elements from the Paganini theme (already familiar from Brahms's and Rachmaninov's treatments of it) rather than the theme in its entirety: this admirable performance we already know from its appearance on DG16054, where however it took up a whole ten-inch side. In the present disc Einem's *Capriccio* is thrown in as a make-weight: it is a rather arid piece of note-manipulation, with a recording as dry as the music itself. On the whole of this side there is a faint rhythmic swish. L.S.

BIZET. L'Arlésienne: Suites Nos. 1 and 2. Carmen: Suite No. 1.

Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by **Herbert von Karajan**. Columbia 33CX1608 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8½d. P.T.).

These are very good performances and of the kind one would like immediately to recommend. But whoever records this music comes up against Beecham on his home ground (or one of his many home grounds) and with the best will in the world it is quite impossible to say that this is as good. Compare the starts of the *Prelude* in both performances. Karajan gets it well played, Beecham produces something electrifying. Or if you think that here Beecham is naughty, compare the playing of the *Adagietto*: Karajan does it very well, Beecham evokes an almost unbearable nostalgia of beauty. Over and over again Beecham gets something quite incomparable.

There is so much to commend about the present record (as well as one or two points to question, like the fast speed for the *Fandango*, which scarcely accommodates the *Prelude's* march when it returns), but to me Beecham remains supreme in this field. T.H.

BOCCHERINI. String Quintet in A major, Op. 13, No. 5: Minuet.

SCHUBERT. March Militaire No. 1, Op. 51. Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by **Christoph von Dohnányi**. D.G.G. EPL30258 (7 in., 12s. plus 4s. 8½d. P.T.).

This is the Boccherini minuet that you know coupled with the most familiar of Schubert's marches; the one is an arrangement of a piece for string quintet, the other an orchestration of a piece for piano duet. Both disc and sleeve are coy about revealing the name of the person who effected these metamorphoses, and as far as the Schubert is concerned it is as well that we should not know. Whoever it was is sufficiently vain as to think Schubert needs dolling up with smarmy counterpoints and tricky orchestral effects, and he even adds a coda of his own with a surprise ending borrowed from

Beethoven's Violin Concerto. Perhaps one should not complain, for this little disc is clearly not intended for the sort of people who might object to this streamline Hollywood treatment. The playing is capable and the recording quality admirable. I must add that the music works out at nearly two shillings a minute, which is much too much. There was a time when each of these pieces was expected to fill one side of a 78. R.F.

BORODIN. Prince Igor: Polovtsian Dances. **Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Der Singverein der Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, Vienna** conducted by **Willem van Otterloo**. Fontana CFE15025 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3d. P.T.).

Orchestrally the dances receive a moderately good performance, though in one place a very backward balance for the clarinet quite spoils the effect of his dialogue with the oboe. The chorus, however, does not seem to be strong enough, or to be recorded strongly enough, to contribute its full share to the music. Certainly it contributes nothing whatever as far as the words are concerned; only a comparison of the whereabouts of the sibilants of the various translations leads me to be fairly sure that German is (as you would of course expect) the language used on the record. M.M.

BRAHMS. Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 77. Zino Francescatti (violin), **Philadelphia Orchestra** conducted by **Eugene Ormandy**. Philips ABL3229 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

Renardy, Concertgebouw, Munch (7/51) LXT2566
de Vito, Philharmonia, Schwarz (3/54) ALP1104
Marty, Philharmonia, Kletzki (10/54) 33CX1165
Milstein, Pittsburgh S.O., Steinberg

Stern, R.P.O., Beecham (12/54) CTL7070
Haendel, L.S.O., Celibidache (1/55) ABL3023
Oistrakh, Dresden Staatskapelle, Konwitschny (2/55) CLP1032
Helfetz, Chicago S.O., Reiner (7/55) DGM18199

Schneiderhan, Berlin P.O., Kempe (3/56) (7/58) (R) RB16117

Kogan, Paris Cons., Bruck (5/57) DGM18132
Senofsky, V.S.O., Moralt (2/58) 33CX1506
Menuhin, Berlin P.O., Kempe (5/58) SBL5222
(10/58) ALP1568

If it were my job to balance a solo violin and orchestra for a gramophone company wanting the Brahms Concerto, I think I would ask them to begin with the recapitulation in the slow movement. The oboe sings the tune, as indeed it did at the start of the movement, but it is now accompanied by the solo violin descending in triplet semi-quaver octaves. If the oboe solo were audible without any microphone juggling I would assume that the balance was not far out. This solo is always audible in the concert hall, but very seldom on a record. You cannot hear it at all on this new Philips disc. And yet on its predecessor from the same firm the balance is perfection. Then the conductor was Beecham and he would have insisted on a vital tune being heard. I do not understand why all conductors do not stand up for their orchestra's rights as he does; they must often be conscious that the trial recording is not reproducing what the composer wanted.

What all this amounts to is that on the new recording Francescatti is balanced too prominently. His violin sounds more than life-size, and when the orchestra comes in with what should be a good loud rousing tutti there is in fact a sense of anti-climax, for the excitement, instead of increasing, diminishes. I feel Francescatti is sometimes a little liable to press on when a little more repose would be welcome. The celestial music after the cadenza does not quite make its full effect because the orchestra sounds for once too loud; and the violin too perhaps. (Was the level brought up here?) Francescatti tends to lose his grip in the coda of the finale, as do nearly all violinists. These are momentary imperfections and I have no wish to imply this is not a good piece of playing. It is very good; not great, as in the recent Menuhin recording, but very good. The tone is full, there is understanding of the music from both soloist and conductor, and fine playing from the orchestra. Ensemble is exemplary. The concerto sounds the great work that it is, and with better balance it would be one of the best versions available. R.F.

BRUCH. (a) Violin Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 26.

MENDELSSOHN. (b) Violin Concerto in E minor, Op. 64. Yehudi Menuhin (violin), **Philharmonia Orchestra** conducted by (a) **Walter Susskind** and (b) **Efrem Kurtz**. H.M.V. ALP1669 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8d. P.T.).

Coupled as above:
Campoli, N.S.O., Kisch (12/54) LXT2904
Milstein, Pittsburgh S.O., Steinberg (12/54) CTL7059
Ricci, L.S.O., Gamba (8/57) LXT5334
Schneiderhan, Bamberg S.O., Leitner (10/58) DGM19124

These are decent workaday performances of the concertos, on the part of both soloist and orchestra. Yet too much is missing of romantic poetry, of strength, and of delicacy fully to illuminate the music. Again, the recording is decent throughout, with good tone and balance; yet it lacks any special qualities of brilliance or clarity which could allow the disc to be considered a definitive version of the music.

For not only is each concerto separately available in many first-class versions with different backings, but at least four discs offer direct competition by having adopted an identical coupling (obviously a sensible one). Of these both Ricci's Decca and Schneiderhan's D.G.G. may be strongly recommended; the former perhaps offering rather the more brilliance both in style of performance and in quality of recording, the latter the more sweetness, again in both characteristics. M.M.

★**DEBUSSY. La Mer.**

★**RAVEL. Daphnis and Chloe: Suite No. 2. Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Erich Leinsdorf**. Capital Stereophonic SP8395 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8d. P.T.). Mono: (2/58) P8395.

These are glowing performances; every possible care has been taken to give full effect to the warmth and colour of both scores, themselves among the most brilliant

of their period. The quality of sound of the mono version was outstandingly good, and so is that of the new stereo. Reviewing the older version a year ago, only obtrusive basses at the opening of *La Mer* seemed to me to be worth adverse comment, and replaying now the same disc they still do; but that solitary defect is happily altogether absent from the new stereo version. Perhaps some fractional want of warmth of sound, and a rather low recorded volume level involving amplification in reproduction of surface and background noises, still stand between the disc and perfection; but the gap is a very small one. M.M.

★**DEBUSSY. Prélude à l'après midi d'un faune.**

★**RAVEL. Bolero. La Valse. Rhapsodie Espagnole. Boston Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Charles Munch**. R.C.A. Stereophonic SB2019 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2d. P.T.). Mono: RB16130 (9/58).

The sleeve-note of this disc is devoted to a long panegyric on the virtuosity of the modern orchestra, what demands are made on the players and how shaken the poor primitives of Haydn's day would be if confronted with those demands. All probably true enough, from what we know of orchestral standards of the past and the humble status of the players; but I think many people will find distasteful this kind of bragging that the musical world only came of age with the advent of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. We can hear for ourselves that it's a virtuoso body—though some of the woodwind show by their intonation in *Bolero* that they have their weaknesses too—but even the finest precision tool is of limited value unless handled by someone who can get the best from it. Of what use is a virtuoso orchestra, capable of all kinds of subtleties, unless it is treated sensitively? These interpretations of Ravel and Debussy by Charles Munch—as I find, on reference, W.S.M. also felt when he reviewed the mono version of this disc—conspicuously lack poetry, atmosphere, elegance, magic or sensuousness. Detail is clearly recorded, but there is a thinness of quality (especially in the bass) in *La Valse* and faulty balance both in the Debussy (the antique cymbals should be the most delicate tinkle, not a breakfast-gong wallop) and in the *Bolero* (Ravel never meant the side-drum to sound like an imitation of the battle-scene in *Heldenleben*). Very disappointing. L.S.

DVORAK. 'Cello Concerto, Op. 104.

Tibor de Machula ('cello), **Vienna Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Rudolf Moralt**. Philips GBR6533 (10 in., 20s. plus 7s. 10d. P.T.).

Janigro, Vienna Op., Dixon (6/54) WLP5225
Fournier, V.P.O., Kubelik (3/55) LXT2999
Tortelier, Philh., Sargent (1/56) ALP1306
Mainardi, Berlin P.O., Lehmann (7/56) DGM18236
Cassado, V.P.M., Perla (4/57) PL9360
Starker, Philh., Susskind (10/57) 33CX1477
Rostropovich, R.P.O., Boult (7/58) ALP1568

The best that can be said of this performance is that it seems to be an attempt to rethink the work; to discard traditional speed variations, for instance, and to stick to



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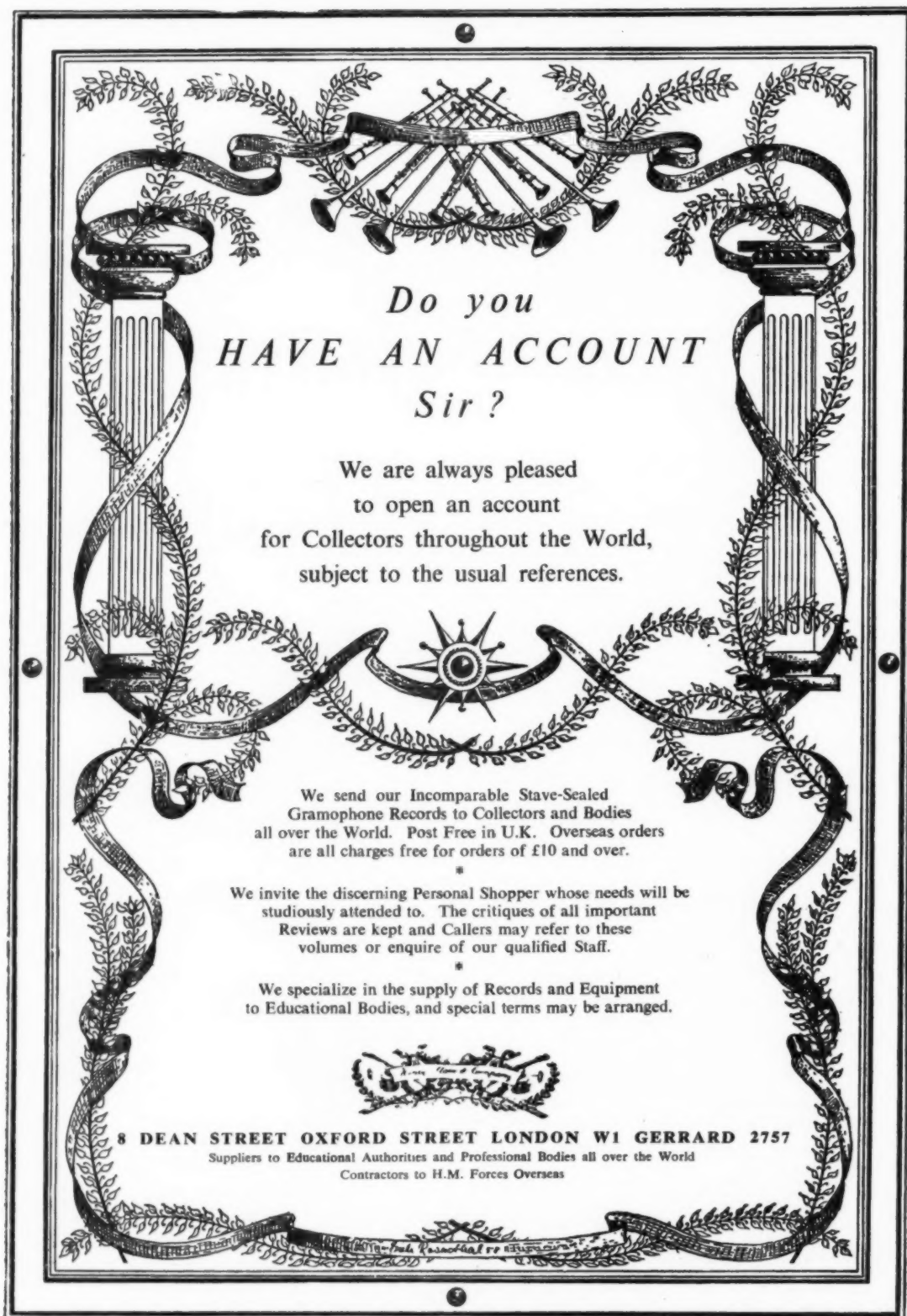
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what Dvořák put down in his score. Thus, the first movement's horn tune, played later by the 'cellist, is not allowed to "dream" but, though played *un poco sostenuto*, is still kept in tempo, as marked. This in itself is laudable, of course: unfortunately, it wants to be done a great deal better than it is here.

There is still no excuse for a soloist who shows little sense of rhythm but hurries abominably at times (especially in the finale), nor for one who, however observant of speed markings he may be, plays with almost unvaried dynamics and tone (not helped by the recording either, which brings him far too close). In fact, if a soloist is going to rethink a great concerto, he needs better musicianship than Tibor de Machula shows here—the whole thing is so very poorly judged.

The late Rudolf Moralt, an admirable musician, sounds very rattled at times, while the recording is variable, both in quality and in balance. Nor is the 10-inch format as attractive as it seems, for it lets us in for a turn-over only 39 bars after the slow movement's start (at the first big tutti in G minor—they end the first side by inserting a major chord).

It is worth the extra money to buy Tortelier or Rostropovich. T.H.

DVOŘÁK. Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 95, "From the New World". Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. Capitol P8454 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8½d. P.T.).

DVOŘÁK. Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 95, "From the New World". Cleveland Orchestra conducted by George Szell. Philips GBR6531 (10 in., 20s. plus 7s. 10d. P.T.).

DVOŘÁK. Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 95, "From the New World". Czech Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Václav Talich. Supraphon LPV264 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8½d. P.T.).

DVOŘÁK. Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 95, "From the New World".

SMETANA. Ma Vlast: Vltava. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Karel Ancerl. Fontana CFL1024 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

Dvorak, Symphony No. 5:
Chicago S.O., Kubelik (2/53) ALP1018
V.S.O., Horenstein (11/53) PL7500
Hamburg R.O., Schmidt-Isserstedt

Philharmonia, Galliera (2/54) LGX66007
Hague P.O., Dorati (10/54) 33SX1025
N.B.C. S.O., Toscanini (2/55) ABL8021
Berlin R.I.A.S., Fricasay (9/58) (R)RB16116
V.P.O., Kubelik (6/56) DGM18142
Philharmonia, Malko (9/57) LXT5291
Philadelphia, Ormandy (1/58) SBL5216
French Nat. R.O., Silvestri (3/58) ALP1550
Berlin P.O., Kempe (12/58) ALP1623

"What", you are tempted to ask, after listening to sixteen performances of the *New World* Symphony in about a quarter as many days, "is so new about it?" But then again, it's exactly this sort of concentrated listening that answers the unspoken question: there are indeed some conductors who make the work (my favourite among Dvořák's symphonies)

sound eternally new, simply by doing—more rather than less—what the music says, and by knowing what Dvořák was after, and loving him for doing so.

Toscanini's was such a performance, because this respect for a composer's musical wishes was a basic article of Toscanini's interpretative faith, also because Toscanini knew much about the shaping of a melody, and Dvořák was a great melodist and because Toscanini approached a symphony as a single musical experience in which pulse was the outward manifestation of an inner spiritual unity. I don't care for the sound of the R.C.A. recording, but this is certainly a superb account of the *New World*.

The new Fontana one conducted by Karel Ancerl is of the same kind. It's conceived in one piece, and absolutely fresh. In the "native woodnotes wild" passages, chiefly the middle movements, the pacing and balance and control of articulation suggest the fresh air and the pungent smells of bush and heath as pervasively as does Toscanini. The tempi are all absolutely right; this is particularly rare in performances of the third movement, where most conductors have a mirage of the green light for application of rhapsodic rubato. And Ancerl contrives as well to bring out characteristic detail, middle parts, grace notes, sonorities of various kinds, without damaging the flow of the music. Faults: a little pre-echo in the introduction and a strange horn timbre like a popgun at the beginning of the first development section. Virtues, as yet unmentioned: woodwind artistry, brass sonority, the tang in the sound of the solo *cor anglais*; above all a happy union of the letter and the spirit, of essential Dvořákishness and blazing revelation.

Ancerl's record has the bargain value, too, of including a well-phrased, euphonious and vivid performance of *Vltava* as fill-up (this is also available as an EP, CFE15027, with a not impossible side-change). Philips further spur any future competitors by putting out a ten-inch version under George Szell, a dramatic but not steadily conceived reading, only fairly well played. This will suit the parsimonious collector, so long as he isn't fussy about accuracy, fine execution, or profundity.

All the others, including two new ones, occupy two 12-inch sides. T.H. has detailed their virtues and vices over the years, and I'm relieved to find that I have mostly had the same reactions. Kubelik's Decca set is beautiful in a generalised way, and very dapperly played with champion brass; but a lot of it is slow by Dvořák's markings, and as a whole the performance is more euphonious than full of character. Kempe's reading is beautiful too, but rather slack, and portly where it should be bluff or chirpy. Ormandy on yet another Philips sounds too high-powered for me, and the acoustic is as thin as matchwood. The old Horenstein no longer sounds well, and the slow movement is dreadfully sluggish. Vox announce a new stereo recording by him. I was very thrilled by the Fricasay/D.G.G., though it's a reprehensible distortion of the music; but

Silvestri's egocentric didn't raise the pulse at all.

For various general reasons the others left no marked impression. The new Leinsdorf/Capitol issue is of the same kind: a nice, carefully prepared reading with an acceptable sound to it, but full of needless glosses—a ritenuto here, an accent there—that shed no light; and nor does the interpretation as a whole. The Supraphon one, conducted by Talich, is more interesting; but it's generally rather drowsy and imprecise—even with this marvellous orchestra—and the full passages are a mess, when you compare them with Ancerl or Kubelik. The record is quite efficiently produced, with a warm, not very sharply focused sound.

Sixteen versions: several others have fallen by the wayside in recent months. More will certainly come before the year is out—and not only stereo re-issues. The two new Philips ones suggest that intending contestants must think about ten-inch format (bogey for the *New World* is 40 minutes), or a substantial fill-up. W.S.M.

★**FRANCK. Symphony in D minor. Boston Symphony Orchestra** conducted by Charles Munch. R.C.A. Stereophonic SB2009 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.). Mono: (1/58) RB16036.

This is a finely conceived performance that digs out as much profundity as is to be found in the symphony's first movement, gives an air of exhilaration to the finale, and gets real contrast by a middle movement played at a true *allegretto* and with really captivating delicacy. There are, it is true, occasions when a mere *poco rallentando* is turned into something much more and times when a slower speed for a passage is unnecessarily adopted, but by and large it is as good Franck playing as the last recording I heard (Giulini's) was bad.

The playing is extraordinarily good and so is the recording. I found the trumpets a bit strident in the first movement and just here and there the top strings didn't quite keep their quality when playing loud and high. Reviewing the mono version of this performance J.N. complained about the nearness of woodwind and harp in the second movement—very justifiably, as I discovered when I referred to that record: but I am glad to say that this defect is very largely removed on this stereo disc. Blend and ensemble in the orchestra are very good and the balance and intonation of the woodwind chording are a special delight to the ear. T.H.

GLINKA. Kamarinskaya. SUPPE. The Beautiful Galathea: Overture. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Paul Kletzki. Columbia SEL1603 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3½d. P.T.).

A very enjoyable little disc. I thought that the opening of *Kamarinskaya* might have had a bit more attack—something more arresting is called for—but the slower of the two tunes Glinka uses in this delightful piece is beautifully phrased, while the other is alert and pointed. The whole perform-

ance is attractive—and certainly much better than that of the Bamberg orchestra under Perlea on their recent Glinka disc.

If I add that the Suppé overture is played with very great charm, you will see that this is altogether a record to cheer you up on a dark day. The recording is very good on both sides. T.H.

★**GLINKA. Orchestral Works.** Russian and Ludmilla: Overture. A Life for the Czar: Overture. Kamarinskaya. Jota Aragonesa. Valse Fantaisie. A Night in Madrid. **Bamberg Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Jonel Perlea**. Vox Stereophonic STPL10600 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.). Mono: PL10600 (12/58).

When the monophonic record of these Glinka pieces appeared, though I wasn't very enthusiastic about the performances, at least I welcomed *Kamarinskaya* as filling a gap in the catalogues, for it is a very attractive piece. This month, as well as having the stereo reissue of the same performance, we have others, conducted by Steinberg and Kletzki. As far as *Kamarinskaya* goes, the choice is easily Kletzki, for Steinberg's handling of the music is relentlessly firm, while Perlea's is dreadfully flabby (and also takes liberties with speeds). But in this record as a whole, Perlea's conducting does not amount to much and performances all too often lack rhythm and zest.

As to sound, I thought the mono record not very good but find much more warmth and depth in this stereo version—it seems to me to be altogether better. But it still suffers from one trouble I noted in its monophonic predecessor, forward woodwind recording that is often completely unnatural. When, in *Kamarinskaya* for instance, the woodwind as a body repeat the string statement of the first theme, the most inattentive ear must surely notice that they do so with no sense of orchestral perspective.

To sum up: the idea of a disc of Glinka pieces is a good one—but they want to be far better played than they are here. T.H.

★**GRIEG. Peer Gynt.** Suite No. 1, Op. 46: Suite No. 2, Op. 55. **Bamberg Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Jonel Perlea**. Vox Stereophonic STPL10250 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

L.S.O., Fjeldstad (11/58) SXL2012
Hollweg, R.P.O., Beecham (1/59) ASD258

The third stereo *Peer Gynt* does not offer good enough value to withstand the rivalry of the other two. Both Fjeldstad and Beecham offer several extra movements on each side (Vox, the firm which specialises in ample playing time, could easily have fitted the two suites on to a ten-inch disc) played with glowing tone and conducted with immense distinction. The Bamberg orchestra plays quite well but Mr. Perlea doesn't find the clue to Grieg's genius; the performances are nondescript and just a bit stolid. Vox's stereo gives an expansive orchestral sound but the balance is odd; the percussion seems to be placed at the

front of the orchestra! There is a good deal of tape hiss.

Between Fjeldstad and Beecham I decline to choose for reasons outlined in my review in January; you won't go wrong with either. W.S.M.

HOWARD HANSON. The Composer and his Orchestra (narrated by Howard Hanson). Part 1: Individual Instruments and Instrumental Families. Part 2: Interplay of Orchestral Colours. **Hanson: Merry Mount Suite. Eastman-Rochester Orchestra** conducted by **Howard Hanson**. Mercury MMA11008 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.).

Howard Hanson's *Merry Mount* was included successfully in the New York Metropolitan season of 1934, but is quite unfamiliar over here. The opera is based on a poem by Richard Stokes, which is in turn based on Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Maypole of Merry Mount*. The plot deals with Puritan life in New England; somewhat modified, however, by the tendency of Pastor Bradford, the hero, to see only too readily the attractions of non-Puritan girls in general and one Lady Marigold Sandys in particular. Hanson's music, as far as may be judged from the orchestral suite now available, is appropriately simple and agreeably melodic, a most welcome addition to the catalogue in its own right.

It is, however, in this new record only the prop which supports the main structure, an illuminating account by Hanson of the orchestral resources he has used in the work, illustrated by extracts. Hanson, director of the Eastman School of Music since 1924, is no stranger to the academic side of things, and his exposition is experienced and lucid. First he takes the instrumental families separately, adding to the solo illustrations passages in which the family plays as a unit—a useful extension of earlier practice, for three trumpets (for example) do make a sound which is sufficiently different from that of one to be, in these initial stages, abundantly worth illustration. All the wind with the normal "extras" appropriate to an orchestra of 70-80 players are included. So are the strings. Here, however, space has wisely been saved by omitting the obvious; yet, even so, surely the *pizzicato* might usefully have been explained and identified? A few full chords are included, but "used as a gigantic guitar" without mention of the word "*pizzicato*" seems an inadequate description. Very good recording helps the harps and percussion to tell; in this section occur the only really notable omissions, celeste and glockenspiel.

These are presumably excluded because not scored for in the *Merry Mount* suite, from which all the illustrations are drawn (Rimsky-Korsakov offers substantial recedent for this self-quotation!). This is certainly a limitation, though not a crippling one, in the solos. Much less so in the ensembles; and in the second part of the record Hanson dissects some ensembles in a way never as far as I know previously put onto disc. All good orchestration strikes a balance between blend and contrast, and Hanson's own taste tends toward a prefer-

ence for blend; to hear his perfectly blended ensembles taken apart, separate performances of the string, woodwind, brass and percussion contributions preceding the collective performance, is to catch a rewarding glimpse of his mind at work.

Indeed the whole record is nowhere less than illuminating in the highest degree, culminating in the actively enjoyable performance of the complete music. It is addressed to the alert listener rather than the professional student; yet he will be a monstrously impenetrable student who can learn exactly nothing from it. M.M.

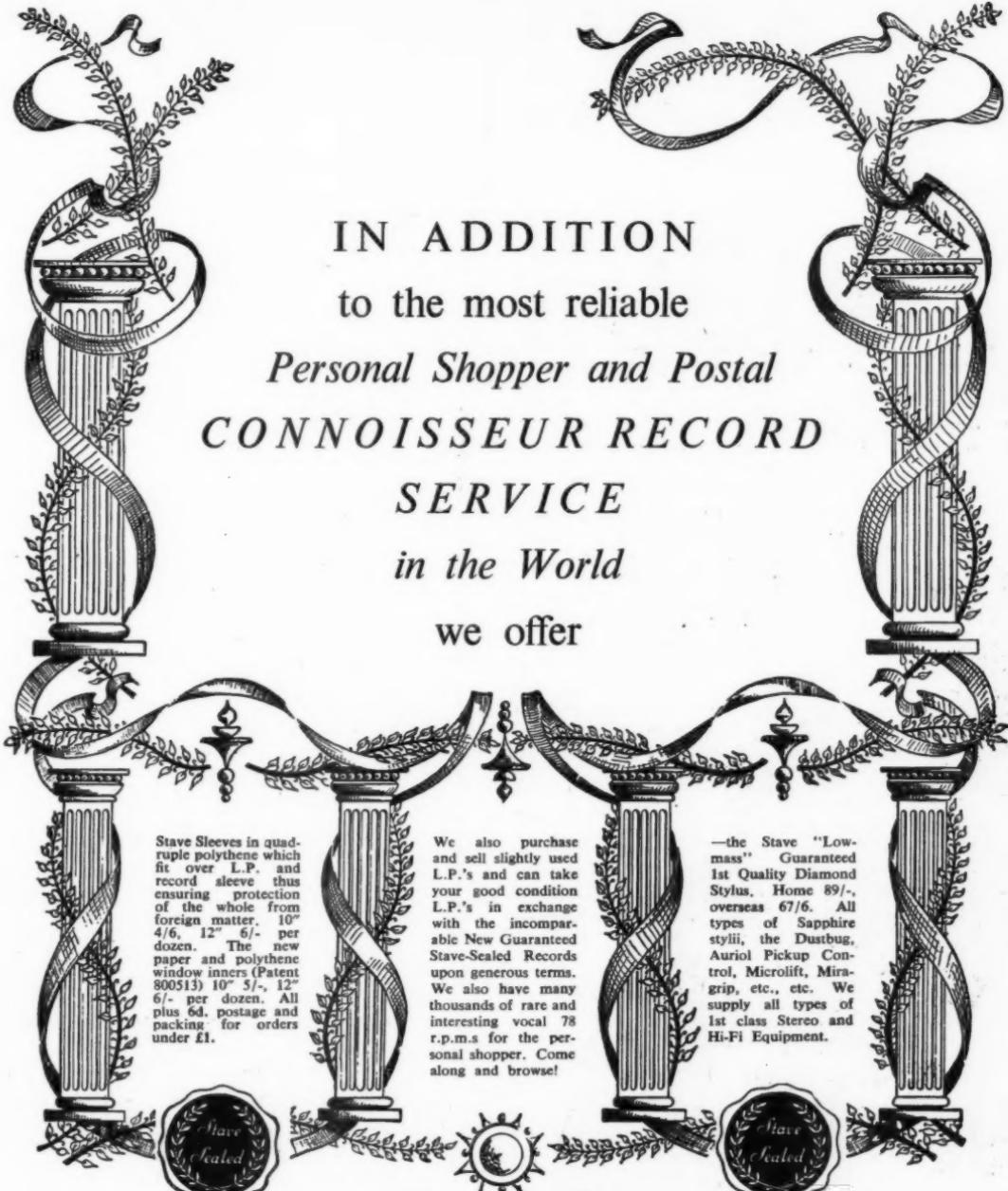
★**HAYDN. Flute Concerto in D major. Oboe Concerto in C major, HV VIIG: C.I. Kurt Redel (flute), Kurt Kalmus (oboe), Munich Chamber Orchestra** conducted by **Hans Stadlmair**. D.G.G. Stereophonic SLPEM136004. (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

Haydn's Oboe Concerto (if indeed it is his) may be heard in a mono version by Evelyn Rothwell. This stereo performance by Kurt Kalmus is beautifully played and well recorded; the oboe tone is straight enough to sound "classical" yet flexible and charming in contrasting moods. The Flute Concerto on the reverse side is new to the catalogues, and though it may not be first-rate Haydn it is most enjoyable music, and Kurt Redel plays it with obvious zest and pleasure. I found the orchestral layout very convincing in stereo, and the soloist intelligently placed *vis-à-vis* his colleagues. Stadlmair accompanies expertly, and maintains good tempi throughout. For Haydn-lovers, this disc is a very desirable addition to the library. D.S.

★**LISZT. Piano Concertos.** No. 1 in E flat major, G.124: No. 2 in A major, G.125. **Julius Katchen** (piano), **London Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Ataulfo Argenta**. Decca Stereophonic SXL2097 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.). Mono: LXT5330 (4/58).

★**LISZT. Piano Concertos.** No. 1 in E flat, G.124: No. 2 in A major, G.125. **Alfred Brendel** (piano), **Pro Musica Symphony Orchestra, Vienna** conducted by **Michael Gielen**. Vox Stereophonic STPL10420 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.). Mono: PL10420 (3/58).

Of the many recordings of the two Liszt concertos, the Katchen and the Brendel have always seemed to me much the best, and here they both are, turning up in stereo form at the same moment. Katchen's is the conventional interpretation at its best, brash and exciting but with plenty of poetry at the right moments. Brendel underplays the virtuosity and lays unconventional stress on the music itself, and in the A major as far as this listener is concerned his quieter and more dedicated playing pays dividends; the work sounds better music than usual and less vulgar; in fact scarcely vulgar at all. In the E flat perhaps Katchen just has the edge. As for stereo technique, Decca come out of the contest well on top. The



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SYMPHONY No. 1 in C MINOR (Bells of Zlonice) (Dvorák)
Prague Symphony Orchestra
Conductor: Vaclav Neumann
LPV 370

STRING QUARTET No. 14 in D MINOR, D. 810 (Death and the Maiden (Schubert)
QUARTETSATZ, D. 703 (Schubert)
Smetana Quartet
(J. Novak, L. Kostecky, J. Rybensky, A. Kohout)
LPV 308

CONCERTO IN A MAJOR FOR CLARINET AND ORCHESTRA, K. 622 (Mozart)
Vladimir Riha (clarinet)
Czech Philharmonic Orchestra
Conductor: Vaclav Talich
LPM 411

NONET No. 1, Op. 32 (J. Ridky)
Czech Nonet
LPM 359

A SUITE OF CZECH, MORAVIAN AND SLOVAK FOLK SONGS AND DANCES, Op. 30 (Z. Folprecht)
Maria Tauberova (soprano), Beno Blachut (tenor), and Vaclav Bednar (bass)
Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra
Conductor: Zdenek Folprecht
A WREATH OF SONGS FROM MORAVIAN SLOVAKIA (E. Axman).
Libuse Domaninska and Cenek Micak (soloists)
Prague Smetana Theatre Orchestra
Conductor: Jan Hus Tichy
LPV 430

SLOVAK NURSERY RHYMES
Slovak Folk Songs, Arr. by Josef Matej
Miroslav Matejo (piano), Frantisek Malotin (flute)
Prague Radio Children's Chorus
HALI BELI, Moravian Folk Songs, Arranged by Josef Matej
Prague Radio Children's Chorus
Chamber Ensemble of the Radio Symphony Orchestra/Bohumil Kulinsky
RUNNING WATER, Moravian Folk Song
THEY ARE SADDLING MY HORSE, Czech Folk Song
Arr.: Frantisek Lysek
Brno Children's Chorus/Frantisek Lysek
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Stefan Lesay (vocalist)
ON THE QUIET DANUBE, Folk Song
Anton Balaz (vocalist)
WHEN I SEE THE OMSSEN FIELD, Folk Song
Edita Huthova (vocalist)
MY FATHER TOOK AN OATH, Folk Song
BOYS, LET'S GO AND FIGHT! Folk Song
Stefan Lesay (vocalist)
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piano quality is better and also less variable, and instruments generally are more securely positioned. The Vox has a slightly phoney-sounding resonance. In both versions the orchestral playing is well above average, but best on the Decca disc. I must stress that the Vox is a very good record; its defects, such as they are, are comparative. If you want performances a bit off the beaten track you may prefer it. But in the stereo versions the technical superiority of the Decca is striking, and on the whole it is the one I would choose. R.F.

LEONCAVALLO. Der Bajazzo: "Dann kommt zum Haus des Herrn" (Glockenchor). **Württemberg State Theatre Chorus** conducted by **F. Leitner**.

MASCAGNI. Cavalleria Rusticana: Intermezzo. **Württemberg State Orchestra** conducted by **Ferdinand Leitner**.

VERDI. Aida: Hymn and Grand March. **Munich Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Leopold Ludwig**. D.G.G. EPL30008 (7 in., 12s. plus 4s. 8½d. P.T.).

In case you do not know it, what the Germans call *Der Bajazzo* ("the clown") is what we call *I Pagliacci*. This is the "Ding-dong" bell chorus adequately performed. The other piece on this side you will be likely to recognise. It is rather heavily done.

The *Aida* is not the hymn, pace the titler—but the Grand March *tout court* (which as someone once said, is best translated as "too long"). It is a good, solid, bold, resonant performance, without chorus. P.H.-W.

★**MENDELSSOHN. A Midsummer Night's Dream**—Incidental Music (complete). **Jennifer Vyvyan** (soprano), **Marion Lowe** (soprano), **Women's Chorus of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Peter Maag**. Decca Stereo SXL2060 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.). Mono: LXT5344 (11/57).

M.M. reviewed the monophonic version of this disc with enthusiasm for the orchestral contribution and I very much agree with his view. The playing is light, imaginative and always phrased with real feeling for the music. Only the *Nocturne* is a trifle dull (as it also seemed to M.M.). But he very much disliked the singing, thinking it all too human in sound, and here I am rather an incompetent critic for I confess I have never heard fairy singing. As it is I can only say that while Marion Lowe does perhaps sound a bit human contraltoish, I love Jennifer Vyvyan's singing, especially the way she touches those high notes every time.

However, there are only two numbers with singing in them and the rest is all excellently done. It is, in fact, not quite complete, for there is a *Fairies' March* which is left out. But no matter, for the rest is most enjoyable. M.M. opined that a real ophicleide was used in the *Overture*. Here again I am at a loss, for I don't think I have ever heard an ophicleide: but whatever it is, it is very loud. If it is

an ophicleide, then this is the nearest you will ever come to hearing an Ophicleide Concerto. In the *Dances of the Clowns*, where it should appear again, it is, curiously, not to be heard at all.

The stereo record, I found, needed a very big tilt on the control to stop it from coming mostly from the left-hand speaker—in fact, it was some time before I made it sound like stereo at all: but eventually it was fairly well balanced, even though I do not think it first-class. I doubt if it would have much advantage over the monophonic record played over both speakers. Still, it's a charming record, however you hear it. T.H.

MENDELSSOHN. A Midsummer Night's Dream: Overture; Scherzo; Nocturne; Wedding March.

SCHUBERT. Rosamunde, Op. 26: Overture; Entr'acte in B flat major; Ballet Music No. 1; Ballet Music No. 2. **Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Pierre Monteux**. R.C.A. RB16076 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.).

MENDELSSOHN. A Midsummer Night's Dream: Overture; Scherzo; Nocturne; Wedding March.†

SCHUBERT. Rosamunde, Op. 26: Overture; Ballet Music No. 2; Entr'acte No. 2; Entr'acte No. 1. **Concertgebouw Orchestra** conducted by **George Szell**. Philips ABL3238 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

† These excerpts from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* are also available on Philips GBR6516, reviewed December 1958.

These two discs contain exactly the same music, except for one different piece each of the *Rosamunde* music, and since I am unable to give either a clear recommendation, perhaps a few comparative notes may help the choice. First, the *Midsummer Night's Dream* music.

Overture: both orchestras play it well indeed, though Szell does not always hold the rhythm quite as attractively as Monteux. What does at once emerge is that the Concertgebouw strings are recorded with a rounder sound than their rivals and in this the Philips record has a frequent advantage over the R.C.A., especially in louder passages. *Scherzo:* both excellent, Monteux more relaxed than Szell but equally effective. Both have a really admirable flute soloist to end the piece. *Nocturne:* the Vienna horn over-phrases and sounds like a tyro playing for safety, while the Concertgebouw horn gives just about the worst performance I ever remember: he hurries and sounds as if his breath might give out at any moment, which, I need hardly add, scarcely produces the right atmosphere for this music. No poetry in either performance—a write-off. *Wedding March:* Szell does all repeats and shows that the piece can easily stand the repetition. Monteux does few of them—what a pity not to make the lovely Trio last as long as possible—and though it is equally well played, it sounds short and perfunctory.

Now for *Rosamunde* and its *Overture:* one difference of interpretation which you may feel strongly about—in the introduction Monteux keeps the dotted rhythms in the

melody, as printed, while Szell turns them into triplets (as many conductors do). Also, Szell adds trombones to the bass line in the coda. Both get good performances but I do prefer the more sensitive way Monteux handles those enchanting modulations soon after the start. *Entr'acte in B flat:* one of several quiet pieces where the Vienna strings are recorded more beautifully, but personally I prefer Szell's much faster speed, keeping it light and lyrical (and with a very frisky second Trio) to Monteux's slow and rather sentimental treatment, which makes the piece sound almost interminable. The G major *Ballet Music* is excellently played on both records, while Monteux adds the piece called *Ballet Music No. 1*, often dramatic but constantly slipping into passages of the utmost charm, while Szell does the first *Entr'acte*, a less known and very considerable piece, often of much dramatic power.

If, after all this you know which to choose, you are wiser than I am! The disaster of the Mendelssohn *Nocturne* in both performances would make me seriously consider putting my hand deeply into my pocket and buying the complete Mendelssohn reviewed above and the complete Schubert, conducted by Lehmann on DGM18101/2, two discs which also include some other lovely Schubert. T.H.

MOUSSORGSKY. Night on the Bare Mountain. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by **Willem van Otterloo**. Fontana CFE15023 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3½d. P.T.).

This night on the mountain turns out to be a lively and exciting affair. The orchestra and van Otterloo go at it with gusto and it's a good version in a convenient format (provided you don't mind interrupting your night by turning over, if you know what I mean). They don't generate the electric excitement Giulini gets with the Philharmonia, but that remarkable performance has not yet been separated from its parent disc, that of Tchaikovsky's 2nd Symphony. In this present performance it is the quiet postlude that is the real disappointment, van Otterloo giving it an unimaginative play-through that can only be dubbed mechanical.

The recording is forward and bright, if a trifle coarse. The harp at the end sounds pretty woofly and the woodwind soloists are too close up. However, the general effect is vivid enough. T.H.

MOZART. Les Petits Riens—Ballet, K.10. Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra conducted by **Karl Münchinger**. Decca LW5348 (10 in., 15s. plus 5s. 10d. P.T.).

Les Petits Riens dates from Mozart's visit to Paris in 1778, when Noverre, the great ballet-master and would-be impresario, asked Mozart to write an opera. Nothing came of it, but the ballet was written as a friendly gesture to Noverre (who promptly put his own name to it) and was extended by half-a-dozen arrangements of old French dances made by contemporary Parisian hacks. Mozart was not too pleased with

this state of affairs, though hardly in a position to object, and in any case he was far too much taken up with other events. As Donald Mitchell remarks in his excellent sleeve-note, Mozart never liked the French, yet he was not above penning a pastiche which was in fact better than the original. His Overture and twelve contredanses make a charming and light-hearted suite of pieces, even though the key-sequence is marred somewhat by the absence of the interpolated numbers. Münchinger's interpretation is stylish and attractive, and his orchestra plays accurately if somewhat frostily, making the most of deft rhythms and rococo tunefulness. The body of strings is small enough to allow the flutes to come through clearly and beautifully. On the cover of the record is a rare portrait of Mozart as a child, taken from the collection of Sir Victor Schuster, Bart. D.S.

MOZART. Piano Concertos. No. 14 in E flat, K.449: No. 23 in A major, K.488. **Monique Haas** (piano), **Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Ferdinand Leitner**. D.G.G. DGM18491 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

After hearing Annie Fischer (reviewed below) this sounded rather ordinary Mozart playing. The truth is that it is an altogether different approach, what is sometimes called the athletic style of Mozart playing. Monique Haas plays both works with great neatness and clean technique, she is always light and agile, and for the most part Leitner accompanies with the same approach. The performance of the A major is not new, by the way, being formerly issued on a 10-inch disc, DG16056, and reviewed in July, 1957. J.N. wrote about it then and his enthusiasm warns me that with Miss Fischer still in my mind, I must not underestimate Miss Haas!

Yet I cannot help feeling that there is something a bit prosaic about this playing, intelligent though it is, some lack of that magic which makes one enjoy Mozart deeply rather than just listen to him in a detached sort of way. And surely some of the orchestral part is not all it might be. I thought the playing a bit sluggish in the A major's 1st movement and not always truly rhythmic in its finale. (J.N. also thought this too hurried.) The opening of the E flat's slow movement, too, is handled very dully by Leitner.

These defects apart, there is much to recommend to those who like their Mozart this way. Myself I think there is more in the early E flat concerto than we are given here, while the great A major's slow movement can surely be more deeply felt.

J.N. had some criticisms to make of the recording itself and so have I. The piano tone, though agreeable, is a little wooden and lacks ring. Horns boom a bit in the A major and my review copy of this side had more surface noise than D.G.G. normally give us. It is a workmanlike but not outstanding record of Mozart concertos.

No other disc couples these two, so that may be an additional commendation for

some. Otherwise I should also try Gulda's performance of K.449 (coupled with Strauss's *Burleske* on Decca LXT5013 or by itself on LW5260) and Solomon's of K.488 (with K.491 on H.M.V. ALP1316). T.H.

MOZART. Piano Concertos. No. 21 in C major, K.467: No. 22 in E flat major, K.482. **Annie Fischer** (piano), **Philharmonia Orchestra** conducted by **Wolfgang Sawallisch**. Columbia 33CX1630 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8½d. P.T.).

There is a snag about loving a piece of music especially dearly—you practically never hear a performance that is all you desire. I mention this because this E flat Mozart Piano Concerto is my own favourite of them all—yet everybody concerned with this record, bless them, has given me just the performance I want to hear; one, indeed, that even surpasses the ideal one of my imagination. I can find no praise too high for Annie Fischer's playing, for she makes every phrase a delight. Even plain scale passages become more than neatly played runs of notes, they become music. There is no end to the subtlety of her phrase shaping, of minute easings of tempo and, indeed, of everything that goes to make outstanding Mozart piano playing. If both slow movements sound rather more *adagio* than *andante*, certainly the superb music of the E flat will stand it, especially when it is played as it is here.

The C major sounds rather less wonderful after the E flat, but that is probably only because it is a less wonderful concerto, for I am sure that the same remarkable artistry is brought to it. Cadenzas are by Hummel in the C major, by Busoni in the E flat.

Not less of a delight is that Sawallisch partners his soloist to perfection. These performances have clearly not been made on a run-through rehearsal before the first "take". (If they have, then Sawallisch is a genius at the job!) It sounds as if an appropriately small string body was used, with consequently good balance—indeed, here and there I wondered if the strings were not being unnecessarily held back a bit.

But everybody—soloist, conductor, orchestra and recording experts—has here combined to produce something really outstanding among recordings of Mozart concertos. T.H.

PROKOFIEV. Romeo and Juliet Ballet, Op. 64—excerpts. **New York Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Dimitri Mitropoulos**. Philips ABL3236 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

Berlin P.O., Maazel (2/58) DGM18382
Boston S.O., Munch (7/58) RE25001
It's difficult to compare these 2½ discs (Maazel's selection only takes one side of his record) because they don't quite include the same selection. All contain the so-called "Montagues and Capulets" (see the Munch review for a lucid exposé by R.F.), the Death of Tybalt and the Tomb scene. Each includes something omitted by the others. R.C.A. offers best value with

eleven numbers and a handsome, informative brochure-album. But Mitropoulos is the only one who plays the beautiful, dizzying Balcony Scene.

His performance is turned with a master hand, in all the varying moods of the score, and the orchestral playing is extremely sensitive and well recorded (but so are the others, and Maazel's reading is of an astonishing virtuosity).

Any of the three selections is worth having. What I look forward to is a complete recording—and a production of the ballet, with Ashton's choreography, at Covent Garden. Soon. W.S.M.

PROKOFIEV. Love for Three Oranges—Suite.

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV. The Golden Cockerel—Suite. **Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **William Steinberg**. Capitol P8445 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8½d. P.T.).

I sometimes wonder if the hall where the Pittsburgh orchestra records is altogether flattering to their sound. The result is always clear, with faithful instrumental timbres, but often lacks richness, that glow in the sound that other orchestras can give us in their recordings. I felt this again in this otherwise good performance of the Rimsky where it all seemed a dry, rather woody sound—and it so wants an alluring sheen. This detracted very much from my enjoyment of the performance of this side of the disc, well though it is played.

The Prokofiev suite is another matter and thrives on this sort of sound. We are given all six pieces (the last is omitted on two of the earlier recordings): the Scherzo is cut almost in half but as the missing bit is exact repetition, we probably get quite enough in this concise version. There is highly skilled orchestral playing throughout both sides and the coupling, the only one, may well please those who want the two suites. T.H.

★OPERATIC INTERMEZZI. L'Amico Fritz (Mascagni). **I Quattro Rusteghi** (Wolf-Ferrari). **Il Campiello** (Wolf-Ferrari). **Manon Lescaut** (Puccini). **Fedora** (Giordano). **Adriana Lecouvreur** (Gilea). **Suor Angelica** (Puccini). **Madame Butterfly** (Puccini): Prelude to Act 3. **Berlin R.I.A.S. Orchestra** with **Günther-Arndt Choir** conducted by **Paul Strauss**. D.G.G. Stereophonic 4 SLPE133002 (10 in., 22s. 3d. plus 8s. 8d. P.T.).

Really excellent recording and performances that have plenty of feeling in them. A.P.

★SIBELIUS. Symphony No. 1 in E minor, Op. 39. B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra conducted by **Sir Malcolm Sargent**. H.M.V. Stereophonic ASD260 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8½d. P.T.). Mono: ALP1542. (3/58)

This is a broad, spacious performance, and I thoroughly enjoyed it. I think Sargent takes the big tune in the finale just a little too slow, but generally, as T.H. said when reviewing the mono version,

this is authentic Sibelius. Sargent avoids hurrying the scherzo with the result that the woodwind can tongue the very difficult imitative passage in the middle without sounding as though they were at the end of their tether. And how beautifully the long clarinet solo at the start is played. In the stereo version there is not perhaps quite as much realism as sometimes, though the big climaxes sound very fine; but then they were pretty good on the mono disc. R.F.

RICHARD STRAUSS. Till Eulenspiegel, Op. 28. Cleveland Orchestra conducted by **George Szell**. Fontana CFE15026 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3d. P.T.).
Berlin P.O. Frisay (12/57) EPL30067

I can't imagine anybody who wants a record of *Till* deliberately choosing a 7 in. disc, which takes us back to the bad old days of having to jump up in the middle of a work to turn the record over; but how far people are prepared to put up with this kind of inartistic nuisance in order to save money is a subject on which research might well be made—and very interesting and valuable it would be. However, if you passed up this version of *Till* for that reason you'd be missing a particularly spirited performance—this one certainly is *Sehr lebhaft*, and no mistake; even in the prologue and epilogue there is no wistfulness. Is this all perhaps a shade too spry? Anyway, it is brilliantly played and vividly recorded, and if you don't mind your tone-poems bisected you will enjoy this. L.S.

★**TCHAIKOVSKY. Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 64. Philharmonia Orchestra** conducted by **Constantin Silvestri**. H.M.V. Stereophonic ASD261 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8d. P.T.). Mono: ALP1491 (11/57).
V.P.O., Krips SXL2109

Silvestri's interpretations of Tchaikovsky's symphonies are like one man's meat—they're another Mann's poison. I am absolutely convinced that this is the way *not* to play the fifth symphony; but I will admit that Silvestri obtains a dazzling performance of his bizarre gloss on what Tchaikovsky wrote. And it must be said that many of my colleagues and friends, including T.H. who reviewed the mono issue, have been bowled over by Silvestri's record and prefer it to any other.

The sound of the performance was one of its best qualities; and that sound is definitely enhanced on stereo. I found I had to boost the right hand speaker a little, and then the placing and the balance of timbres stood out even more vividly than before. The little stream of runs for clarinet and bassoon under the first subject of the first movement, when it begins to get going, was extremely clear and warm on mono, and here it is that bit more distant that lends enchantment to the aural view; the string dialogue in the development (letter N of the score) is wonderfully spacious and dramatic, and so is the placing of the heavy brass (which is surprising for its lightness of weight in climaxes, firm but not thick). It's extremely good stereo

recording. As to the performance, laudable features are the expressive flexibility of the solos and dialogue in the slow movement; the superlative execution of the finale, particularly in the coda which is taken at a fabulous pace; and the inclusion of the important bit of development in the finale which is sometimes regrettably omitted. Tchaikovsky was an extremely subjective composer and so it's natural that our response to his music should be subjective too. If you happen to like the way Silvestri deals with Tchaikovsky this record is astonishingly well done of its kind. W.S.M.

TCHAIKOVSKY. Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74, "Pathétique". Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by **Jean Martinon**. Decca LXT5483 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2d. P.T.). Stereophonic: SXL2004 (11/58).

Mono:

Vienna P.O., Karajan	(1/53) 33CX1026
Philharmonia, Cantelli	(6/53) ALP1042
Paris Cons., Kleiber	(5/54) (R) LXT5370
Concertgebouw, Kempen	(1/55) (R) ABL3127
Hamburg R.O., S. Isserstedt	(2/55) L.X.66031
Berlin P.O., Frisay	(2/55) DGM18104
N. Y. at Sdium S.O., Bernstein	(3/55) AXTL1068
Leningrad P.O., Mravinsky	(2/57) DGM18334
Chicago S.O., Kubelik	(6/57) MRL2000
Suisse, Ansermet	(6/57) LXT5306
Philharmonia, Silvestri	(12/57) ALP1495
Philadelphia, Ormandy	(12/57) SBL5214
Philharmonia, Kempe	(9/58) ALP1566
Berlin P.O., Markevitch	(11/58) DGM18193
V.S.O., Dorati	(10/58) CFL1019

I reviewed the stereo version of this performance four months ago. It is fairly sound and stands up to strenuous competition. The playing is strong and rich in sound, with a bloom on the strings and some splendid thwacks of percussion (excellent cymbals and a solemn, sinister gong); in a couple of places the wind articulation wasn't perfectly even.

Basically Martinon has a convincing approach to the symphony. I don't like the way he pulls the slow D major tune about at its recapitulation (first movement), nor the meaningless *rit* in the main 5/4 melody, nor the final *allargando* in the march; and it surely distorts the shape of the finale if the second subject is no faster than the first. I think Martinon holds back the first movement climax (trombones to the fore, bar 280) too strongly for the progress of the movement. But the end of this section is very exciting; so is the general treatment of the march. It is a pleasure too to hear the trio of the 5/4 movement taken in tempo; it sounds most natural this way, and the conductor isn't faced with a difficult gear-change when the first tune returns.

Why Decca needed another *Pathétique* I don't know, for in Ansermet's they have one of the most satisfying (and if they are really feeling benevolent they should reissue Monteux's version on R.C.A.). The hottest competition comes from D.G.G. who have three fine versions. I still recommend Frisay's as the most eloquent of all, but Mravinsky's is interesting in a more flexible style; Markevitch's version is finely played but several vital passages fail to come off. I find Kempe's recent H.M.V. very disappointing and contrived. For a bargain Ormandy's Philips is tempting, only just below the finest few. W.S.M.

TCHAIKOVSKY. "Manfred" Symphony, Op. 58. French National Radio Orchestra conducted by **Constantin Silvestri**. H.M.V. ALP1668 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8d. P.T.).

Philharmonia, Kletzki

(11/54) 33CX1189

From the very first note of this symphony it appears that Silvestri considers his own knowledge of the orchestra to be superior to Tchaikovsky's. Further, he demonstrates his lack of understanding both of Byron's *Manfred* and of Tchaikovsky's interpretation of it. What happens? Simply this: Tchaikovsky scores the opening motto-theme—an all-important one in the subsequent course of the entire work—for bass clarinet and three bassoons in unison, and he marks the score *Lento lugubre*. Certainly it would be difficult to find a more suitably lugubrious tone-colour in the orchestral palette than this combination of bass clarinet and bassoons, for it evokes at once the mysterious creature, Manfred, and summarises for us his wanderings and his sufferings. Silvestri will have none of this. He makes the horns double this theme and thus transforms its entire character from something lugubrious and introspective to something noble and heroic. It is absurd to argue that the woodwinds Tchaikovsky asks for cannot be heard through the string chords, for they come through perfectly well in Kletzki's recording. Horns double woodwind again at 1/38 (first movement, bar 38); also at IV/282. Muted trumpets are made to double oboes and clarinets at IV/96; gratuitous and vulgar gong strokes are added on the second beat of every bar at the close of the first movement. Phrasing is often pointlessly altered, yet the result never seems to effect an improvement in the general orchestral balance, which is among the poorest I have heard for a long time.

None of these faults are present in Kletzki's fine interpretation, which, as I said in my previous review, is marred only by two silly cuts in the second movement. Kletzki conducts the Philharmonia, one of the few orchestras in the world able to do this symphony full justice; beside the Philharmonia performance the French orchestra cuts a very sorry figure indeed. There is a good deal of typical but to our ears vulgar vibrato from trumpets, horns and clarinets. Even the strings are vulgar in their slither at III/116, which is doubly stupid since the woodwind can't imitate it when they take over the tune a few bars later. D.S.

TCHAIKOVSKY. Sleeping Beauty—Ballet Suite. Ballet Theatre Orchestra conducted by **Joseph Levine**. Capitol P8449 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8d. P.T.).

Contents: 1a and 1b, 3, 6, 8c (unusual to do the solo variation but not the Rose Adagio), 22 (entrée only), 23, 24, 27) adagio and Coda only 29.

An attractive selection; reference to the Classical LP Catalogue will show whether these are the movements you want—Monteux does a slightly more generous collection on his R.C.A. disc. Mr. Levine once did a ten-inch suite under the title of *Princess Aurora*, now backed against *Les Sylphides* (orchestrated by Britten); I

don't think the Ballet Theatre has ever danced *Sleeping Beauty* in extended form, and indeed it often sounds as much, for various numbers, notably in the *Fairies' pas de six*, and the female variation of the *Bluebird pas de deux*, and one figuration in Aurora's E flat solo, are all taken so fast as to be undanceable. Often on a record, which is bought for home listening, one doesn't mind, but here the feeling of the music is changed, and it *does* come to be annoying—I am thinking of the *Princess Aurora* record which my children have played, day in, day out, for several years, until it became unserviceable; but the same will no doubt prove true of this longer disc. You will also notice a lot of piano continuo in the second side, especially in the final apotheosis, and this sounds makeshift when you are accustomed to full orchestra.

If this doesn't worry you, the record won't, for otherwise it's nicely played with a good lilt and some fetching nuances. The orchestra never sounds sensuously beautiful, as I think Tchaikovsky should, but it's a decent clean sound. W.S.M.

TCHAIKOVSKY. Romeo and Juliet—Fantasy Overture. *Francesca da Rimini, Op. 32. Philadelphia Orchestra* conducted by *Eugene Ormandy*. Philips ABL3228 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

The Philadelphia Orchestra plays these works with all their famous efficiency and aplomb, and one might have thought no more was needed to make this a successful record. Unfortunately a number of little "extras" of one kind and another have been added in order to make the result even glossier and more successful. Thus in *Romeo and Juliet* the cymbals fill in all the gaps in the duelling theme *every* time it comes, instead of some of the gaps some of the times as in the score (Tchaikovsky had more restraint than some people). The timpani continues his roll right through the final bar of all, which would not, I suppose, matter very much but for the fact that he appears to be rolling on C instead of B. I suspect that certain passages were repeated with the volume control at a different level and then edited in regardless; certainly the levels sound unnatural here and there. The pianissimo of the lower strings just before the love theme first appears is one of the loudest I remember. It may be recalled that this love theme appears first on cor anglais and viola but after eight bars gives way to a gently rocking theme for muted violins; I have always imagined this was meant to suggest the quiet of the dark garden below the balcony. This violin theme is entirely in crotchets, and Tchaikovsky very reasonably phrased them "in fours". So far as I know no conductor has ever found anything wrong with this, but Ormandy apparently felt the effect would be improved if the violins phrased "in twos" with pronounced gaps between each pair. It isn't. (When the same theme returns much later in the work on woodwind, he leaves the phrasing in fours as Tchaikovsky wrote it.) And Ormandy surely overdoes the rubato at the climax of the love theme; this is unnecessary vulgarisation.

Francesca da Rimini is rather more successful; in fact, in short doses some of it is very exciting, though I must confess to preferring this work when it is played *with* cuts.

R.F.

TELEMANN. Trumpet Concerto in D major with strings and continuo: Trumpet Concerto in D major with two oboes, bassoon and continuo. *Adolf Scherbaum* (trumpet), *Heinz Nordbruch* and *Heinz Schwesinger* (oboes), *Fritz Henker* (bassoon) and *Karl Grebe* (harpsichord), *Hamburg Bach Orchestra* conducted by *Robert Stehli*. *Quartet in G major with flute, oboe, violin and continuo: Quartet in G major with recorder, oboe, violin and continuo.* *Camera Instrumentale, Hamburg.* D.G.G. Archive APM14114 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

The D.G.G. Archive series has already placed us in its debt by giving us an excellent performance of the Quartet from *Musique de Table II*, which L.S. found "sheer delight" way back in 1954. The new disc offers another Quartet, this time from *Musique de Table I*, and once again the music is delightful, fresh, and in some respects unusual. This extension of a trio sonata, made possible by the addition of one more instrument in the treble range, is always handled in an interesting and unusual way by Telemann. Not for him the three violins of the Italian masters; he wanted variety of timbre, and found it here by combining flute, oboe and violin, with the usual continuo. Another out-of-the-way feature is the five-movement scheme, alternating slow and fast movements throughout. The oboe has some quite fantastic bravura passages in the middle *Vivace*, and Hermann Tötter is pre-eminently able to cope with them.

The other Quartet is for almost the same combination of instruments, the one exception being the recorder, which replaces the flute, but is in fact played by the same man—Burghard Schaeffer. He appears to be equally skilled on both instruments, and the engineers have succeeded in getting an excellent balance in both works. This Quartet, by the way, is in the same key as the one from *Musique de Table*, but is only about half the length.

There is some admirably sweet trumpet playing from Adolf Scherbaum in the two Trumpet Concertos, both of them inspired by the northbound wave of Italian trumpeters and trumpet works emanating from Bologna in the early eighteenth century. It would have been easy for Telemann to write continuously and tiresomely in D major in order to suit the limited resources of his D trumpet; but he gets out of this impasse in a simple but clever way by having the trumpeter sit out now and then. This gives Telemann a chance to modulate and vary the timbre before the trumpet returns to the attack. The small orchestra, under Robert Stehli, plays cleanly and stylishly, with ample regard for problems of ornamentation.

The index card, which as usual is most helpful should be amended slightly at two points: first, under "Origin/Source" the figure "2" should follow "b)". Secondly, under "Place of first publication" the figure "1" should follow "b)". For pleasant musical relaxation and delight, I can thoroughly recommend these splendid performances. D.S.

VIVALDI. Concertos for violin, strings and continuo. (a) Concerto in E minor, Op. 11, No. 2 (P.106), "Il Favorito"; (b) Concerto in C minor (P.419), "Il Sospetto"; (c) Concerto in E major (P.246), "L'Amoroso"; (d) Concerto in D major (P.208), "L'Inquietudine"; (e) Concerto in E major (P.248), "Il Riposo". *I Musici* with (a) *Roberto Michelucci*, (b) *Luciano Vicari*, (c) *Felix Ayo*, (d) *Walter Galozzi* and (e) *Anna Maria Cotogni* (violins). Philips ABL3237 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

I Musici present five concertos, all purporting to be for violin, strings and continuo. By "continuo" they mean harpsichord, which is to all intents and purposes completely inaudible as far as this disc is concerned. By "continuo" Vivaldi means many instruments, not merely the harpsichord; but it stands to reason that whatever he mentions in the score should at any rate be audible. This Italian ensemble sets far too much store by the sheer sensuous beauty of string tone and pays correspondingly little attention to the basic feature of the eighteenth century concerto: the contrast between the soloist(s) and small continuo group on the one hand and the tutti and large continuo group on the other.

In each of these five concertos there is a different violin soloist. A democratic gesture, to be sure, and one that has advantages as well as disadvantages; there is a discernible difference in the styles of these five soloists, and clearly some are more adept than others. Fortunately the music is good and the ensemble has done well to avoid bringing to light Vivaldi's below-par compositions, of which there are many. "Il Favorito" was presumably so called because it was in fact a work chosen frequently by violinists all over Europe, perhaps even more frequently than the "Cuckoo" Concerto which had a great vogue in England. Much of the passage-work is extremely complex, but Roberto Michelucci deals with it in exemplary fashion. His tone is strong and his fingers are nimble; he phrases well and can sustain a poetic line such as that running through the slow movement. This movement, by the way, is one of the few which Vivaldi troubled to ornament himself.

Pincherle refers to several of these named concerti as works which reveal "a state of mind". *Il Sospetto*, the sub-title of P.419, certainly has a "suspicious" first theme, with its odd leap of an augmented fourth in the second bar. For such powerful, dramatic music as this a stronger soloist than Luciano Vicari would have been

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DECCA-GROUP MARCH RELEASES



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Piano Concerto No. 3 in C minor, Op. 37 and Rondo in B flat

JULIUS KATCHEN

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conducted by PIERINO GAMBA

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Brahms

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and supporting cast with

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Tchaikovsky

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Brahms

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Grieg

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Rachmaninov

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Franck

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WILBUR DE PARIS

AND HIS NEW NEW ORLEANS BAND

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This list of Decca's March releases is continued on Supplement page 3.

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welcome. Nevertheless he brings off successfully much of the fanciful material in the first movement, especially a curious descending harmonic sequence which shows Vivaldi in exploratory mood. All these concertos, incidentally, are said to be revised by one Abbado; but I cannot tell in what way he has revised them, unless perhaps his was the decision to make such a hopeless travesty of the slow movement. All we hear on this disc is the orchestral violins in unison and the orchestral basses in unison playing the entire slow movement in two-part harmony.

Felix Ayo plays P.246 with admirable style, though I am not sure whether it is admissible to call this concerto "L'Amoroso". The manuscript in Turin simply gives, as a performance direction, "piano e amoroso", though perhaps it might be argued that this term is rarely enough used to warrant its being borrowed for a title. The remaining two concertos are quite short, and they succeed each other not only on this record but also in the original manuscript (Turin, Giordano collection, Opere Sacre III/5 and III/6). Walter Galozzi gives a good account of P.208, while Anna Maria Cotogni looks after the predominantly pastoral "Il Riposo". This latter is spoilt, to my mind, by a chord-sequence at the end of the slow movement in which nothing particular happens for a considerable period of time, and the bass is separated from the upper notes by wide open spaces that cry out to be filled. D.S.

EUGENE ORMANDY. Weber. Overture from "Der Freischütz". Chabrier. España. Bach. Air on the G string. Tchaikovsky. Waltz from "The Sleeping Beauty". Suppé. Poet and Peasant Overture. Liszt. Hungarian Rhapsody No. 1. Saint-Saëns. Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso, Op. 28. Zino Francescatti (violin), Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. Philips SBL5234 (12 in., 24s. 3d. plus 9s. 5½d. P.T.).

A pleasantly varied selection of "Pops" outstandingly well recorded. There are one or two odd blemishes in the playing; for instance, at the start of one of the quick bits in *Poet and Peasant* the lower strings get completely out of time with the rest of the orchestra. Horns are a little flat at the start of the *Freischütz* overture, and so, surprisingly, is Francescatti at the start of the *Saint-Saëns*. A cold day in the recording studio? Most of the playing, I hasten to add, is glossily good, and Francescatti is a delight. *España* receives a terrific performance. One or two irrelevances linger in my mind. For instance I noticed for the first time that one of the tunes in *Poet and Peasant* is pinched straight out of *Giselle* (Albrecht's indignation theme at the end of Act 1). The *Liszt Rhapsody* is No. 1 of the few that are orchestrated and No. 14 of the piano set; but it is also the original of the *Hungarian Fantasia* for piano and orchestra—in which form it sounds so much better in every way that I wonder that anyone should bother to play the straight orchestral version. And

lastly, it is surely time everyone stopped calling the Air from Bach's Third Suite the *Air on the G string*. It is not played on the G string in this record, needless to say. The silly title derives from a silly Victorian trick-arrangement for violin and piano which certainly does not deserve to be immortalised. R.F.

WILLIAM STEINBERG. Night on the Bare Mountain (Moussorgsky). Marche Slave (Tchaikovsky). Kamarinskaya (Glinka). Dance of the Polovtsian Maidens (Borodin). Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. Capitol PB450 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8½d. P.T.).

"Four of old Russia's most representative composers, in a concert of vividly coloured music from the glorious days of the Imperial Russian court of the Tsars", as the (American) sleeve note begins, all in capitals (and adds a picture of Steinberg apparently taking part in a performance of *The Mikado*). It turns out to be a disc of very high-powered performances, with tremendously good orchestral playing but very short in grace and expressiveness. *Kamarinskaya*, especially, is so bullied along that we get no chance to notice its charm. *A Night on the Bare Mountain* suits the conductor far better and certainly puts out plenty of speed and excitement: yet to hear Giuliani's performance (on Col. 33CX1523) afterwards is to realise that speed plus imagination can give even more excitement, while Giuliani's ending is far more expressive. The *Marche Slave* and the *Polovtsian Dances* go very well, though the former might have started more softly and mysteriously (but maybe the recording engineers are to blame for this).

The general sound is good. But I expect these pieces to excite and allure me in turn: somehow they did neither. T.H.

IMMORTAL PAS DE DEUX. Adam. Valse, Act 1 from "Giselle" (arr. Jacob). Chopin. No. 7, Valse in C sharp minor, Op. 64, No. 2, from "Les Sylphides" (arr. Douglas). Delibes. No. 16b, Violin solo, Act 3 (Violin solo: Steven Staryk) from "Sylvia". Tchaikovsky. No. 14, Pas de deux, from "Casse Noisette": No. 28, Pas de deux, Act 3, from "The Sleeping Beauty". Minkus. Pas de deux from "Don Quixote" (arr. Irving). Rossini-Resphigi. Can-can from "La Boutique Fantasque". Prokofiev. No. 6, Pas de deux from "Romeo and Juliet" Suite No. 1. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Robert Irving. H.M.V. CLP1239 (12 in., 25s. 9d. plus 10s. 1d. P.T.).

The order of the items is as shown, except that the second side begins with *Don Quixote* and ends with *Sleeping Beauty*. The *Giselle* waltz is No. 4b in the Busser score, the one danced in front of all the vine harvesters. Only the adagio is danced of the Nutcracker pas de deux. Of the *Don Quixote*, Irving plays all four numbers; of the *Beauty*, the Adagio, Aurora's variation and the Three Ivans.

I can see a good public for this selection. Not necessarily for anyone who intends to build up a comprehensive library of ballet music, but for someone who wants a few attractive ballet records, this is a clever selection of famous and memorable pas de deux, played with great élan by a first-class orchestra under a conductor who knows the style backwards. Irving almost effortlessly obtains the authentic rush of blood to the head in Tchaikovsky's numbers, the bounce and glitter of *Giselle*, the rapid lilt of Minkus, and the pink and white fondant of Prokofiev. I raised my eyebrows at Mr. Staryk's intonation now and then in the *Sylvia* solo, chiefly because I don't connect him with lapses from accuracy. Here and in all the instrumental solo passages one remarks the cleanness and character of the underlying accompaniments. The bloom of this orchestra's sound is accurately caught by the engineers, and the surges of brass emerge particularly well. This is a record I would strongly recommend to parents with ballet-conscious children. W.S.M.

CHAMBER MUSIC

★**BRAHMS.** Cello Sonatas. No. 1 in E minor, Op. 38; No. 2 in F major, Op. 99. Ludwig Hoelscher (cello), Jörg Demus (piano). D.G.G. Stereophonic SLPM138012 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

The Brahms cello sonatas are a pair because there are only two of them, but they're by no means equally fine. The F major is a cast-iron masterpiece, and suggests what a cello concerto Brahms might have written if he'd tumbled to it before he heard Dvořák's concerto. The E minor is much earlier; the final fugue is almost impossible to bring off in performance because the texture won't balance unless you fake it and make it sound un-Brahmsish but it's worth trying because the last two pages are marvellous. The middle movement is an elephant dancing on tiptoes, and always seems to me a let-down after the very impressive and beautiful first movement.

Hoelscher has, curiously, recorded the E minor with another pianist, for the same company; and, curiously and curiously, both records are being issued here at about the same time. The mono E minor sonata is a more conventional performance than this one. The Hoelscher-Demus team seems set on expounding a universal, non-Teutonic Brahms—on similar lines to Wieland Wagner's non-Teutonic productions of his grandfather's works. Hoelscher and Demus are both at pains to keep the music free from any taint of turgidity. Hoelscher cultivates an airy, nasal tone like the slumbers of a swarm of well-fed bees (R.F. has a more practical description in an adjoining review), and Demus phrases the piano parts with the care and delicacy of a Gieseking devotee. Sometimes his touch has unidiomatic results, as in the dotted second subject of the finale of the E minor sonata (Richter-Haaser does this D

more convincingly), and the beginning of the scherzo of the F major; and occasionally Hoelscher realises a passage in a strange and beautiful but not entirely Brahmsy manner—I am thinking particularly of the see-sawing at the end of the development of the first movement of the F major sonata, where he contrives to spread a glaze over the arpeggios so that you can't actually hear the notes he's playing. Impressionist Brahms; an odd view, but not the general approach of these players. They are particularly successful in the second and fourth movements of the F major work, and their playing is always imaginative. The recording is so efficient that for once you forget the gimmick of stereo; the instruments are firmly placed, and sound absolutely life-like—well, most of the time, for now and then I was reminded that the piano was being recorded by D.G.G. who favour a plummy tone that I've never heard from a live piano. W.S.M.

BRAHMS. 'Cello Sonata No. 1 in E minor, Op. 38.

RICHARD STRAUSS. 'Cello Sonata in F major, Op. 6. Ludwig Hoelscher ('cello), Hans Richter-Haaser (piano). D.G.G. DGM18178 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

Coupled as above:

Schuster, Wuehrer

(12/57) PL9910

Brahms 'Cello Sonata:

Tortelier, Engel

Fournier, Backhaus

(4/55) ALP1233

(12/56) LXT5077

The lifeless and rather boring effect of this record is due primarily to the lack of top and the distant balance of the solo 'cello. Perhaps too, Ludwig Hoelscher has rather a small tone. There is no ring or excitement to any of the 'cello themes, and many of them are in danger of being drowned by the piano. This, of course can happen in live performances, but it is not in this case a mark of realism. Mr. Hoelscher in the concert hall would surely make his 'cello sing more than he can here. The playing is highly competent, and musicianly without being in the least inspired. Ensemble is safe as houses. But there is not enough dynamic range, particularly from the 'cellist, and climaxes go for little—due largely, I expect, to the balance. To turn to the Tortelier or Fournier versions of the Brahms is to rediscover the exciting possibilities of 'cello tone. I must add that the Strauss sonata, written when the composer was nineteen, is played with a good deal more panache than the Brahms, and I am ready to believe that it was given a fine performance. R.F.

***BRAHMS. Piano Quintet in F minor, Op. 34. Eva Bernathova (piano), Janacek Quartet. D.G.G. Stereophonic SLP138009 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).**

Clara Schumann's comment that the F minor Quintet was "a thing of great beauty, a masterpiece of chamber music" is unlikely to be challenged by any music-lover of taste; yet the gramophone companies, so lavish with Brahms's orchestral works, have been signally reluctant to record

this fine chamber work. The only LP version now current is that by the Chigiano Quintet (released seven years ago!); the Nixa recording by the Konzerthaus Quartet and Jörg Demus, and the Capitol by the Hollywood Quartet and Victor Aller (both 1954 vintage, and both admirable) have unfortunately been deleted. There is therefore likely to be considerable interest in this new issue, especially in view of the favourable criticisms the Janacek Quartet has so far received.

Unfortunately, though there are good features about it, neither as a performance nor as a recording is it in the top class. The virtues of this ensemble are in its technical accomplishment and its precision, and in the more direct parts of the work there is plenty of vigour and a strong rhythmic thrust. Against this must be set a lack of sensibility and poetry which is most conspicuous in the slow movement, but which also mars many other parts: the strings in particular tend to be very matter-of-fact. Listen to the prosaic way the 'cello begins the *Allegro non troppo* of the finale: or take the Scherzo—where is the mystery and tension of those insistent repeated figures or the splendid elation of their release in the broad, sweeping chordal phrase? There is also a self-consciousness about nuances of tempo, which are sometimes unconvincing. As to the recording, the string tone is extremely "toppy" (even with a top cut) and metallic—which doesn't help the atmosphere—and there are a large number of crackles and pops on my copy. I wish I could have recommended this. L.S.

BRAHMS. Violin Sonata No. 1 in G major, Op. 78.

GRIEG. Violin Sonata No. 3 in C minor, Op. 45. Josef Suk (violin), Josef Hala (piano). Supraphon LPV293 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

Brahms Sonata No. 1:

de Vito, Fischer

Kogan, Mitnik

Goldberg, Balsam

(1/56) ALP1282

(10/56) 39CX1381

(2/57) AXTL1082

Grieg Sonata No. 3:

Fuchs, Sheridan

Elman, Seiger

(7/54) AXTL1017

(4/56) LXT5113

The violinist, Josef Suk, turns out to be the grandson of the composer who wrote the Asrael Symphony, and the great-grandson of Dvořák. A fine player, too, with excellent rhythm, strong in manner, and with good, rich tone. He's most successful at the Grieg C minor sonata, a work you either love or can't stand (I don't know any other with such beautiful and agreeable themes and such intolerably empty working-out). Though the pianist is rather unpoetic, and the piano tone decidedly utility, this is a superior version to the Elman (who no longer sounds on top of the music) or the old Brunswick which contained efficient but rather careful interpretations.

I was less taken with these artists in Brahms's G major sonata, partly because the piano sound is muffled (you need an exact balance between violin and piano, as R.F. has often pointed out, in this most radiant and lyrical of sonatas), and partly because the performance and recording

don't rival the other three available. Of those, Kogan's has the most attractive sound, de Vito/Fischer the most contemplative reading, and Goldberg/Balsam the performance that says most for the music in the most convincing way. To put the situation in a nutshell: for the Brahms sonata go for Goldberg; for the Grieg choose Suk, but there's still room for improvement. W.S.M.

***DVORAK. Piano Trio in E minor, Op. 90, "Dumky". Suk Trio. D.G.G. Stereophonic SLP133033 (10 in., 22s. 3d. plus 8s. 8d. P.T.).**

In his interesting article, *Stereo—Further Reflections* (p. 491), Mr. Reid A. Railton, surveying the present situation in America, writes that he does not consider that stereo has much to offer in the fields of chamber music, piano pieces, and any kind of music that is "fairly uncomplicated considered as audio signals".

With these words in mind I put the "Dumky" Trio on the turntable and took up the appropriate position not expecting any revelation. I heard, in the event, a superb performance of the work recorded with the utmost fidelity. My room is large and it did seem that the players were actually at the farther end of it with the sounds of the three instruments reaching me in a perfect exchange and blend.

There was no trace of surface noise and, with the exception of a few passages for the violin high up in the *Allegro* and *Vivace* of the first and last Dumky, I have never heard such beautiful string and piano tone on a recording. Every shade is there in a wide dynamic range, and the many expressive passages are of remarkable beauty. This is especially so in the lovely A major Dumky (No. 2), a great deal of which is very soft. I was enormously impressed with the piano tone not merely for its own sake in this work but for what stereo has to offer.

It should be noted that, with the exception of the leader, the composition of the Suk Trio has changed since the issue of the Smetana *Piano Trio* and Suk *Elegy* on Supraphon LPV302. I have not heard that disc, which L.S. reviewed in September 1958, but if the 'cellist and pianist were as good as Milos Sadlo and Jan Panenka

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(both previously members of the Czech Trio) they must have been very good indeed.

L.S., and perhaps others, might find this performance a little on the sentimental side, but I myself do not; and as an example, in my limited experience of the technique of stereo at its best—it is enthralling. A.R.

JANACEK. String Quartet No. 2 "Intimate Pages".

MOZART. String Quartet No. 14 in G major, K.387. Janacek Quartet. D.G.G. DGM18342 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

Janacek String Quartet:
Smetana Quartet (9/58) LPV298
Vlach Quartet (10/58) ALP1622

Amadeus String Quartet:
Amadeus Quartet (10/52) DLP1003
Italian Quartet (12/53) SGN1102
Haydn Quartet, Brussels (3/54) LGM06011
Roth Quartet (6/56) MRL2005
Barbich Quartet (9/56) FL9480

It will be noted that this is the third recording in seven months of Janacek's Second String Quartet—all of them made by Czech ensembles. I have not heard the Smetana Quartet version, but the other two are so good that there should be no need for any further rivals for some years to come. The new disc of the Janacek quartet played by the Janacek Quartet is more impassioned than the Vlach version and perhaps not quite so clear as to detail; this, so far as it is a criticism at all, refers to the players who occasionally cover up a phrase or two of no great moment. The recording itself is warm and translucent and beautifully balanced. The Vlach are perhaps more fastidious over detail; for instance, they always play the motto phrase that we first hear at the very beginning in strict time, whereas the Janacek people do not attempt rhythmic accuracy. I am inclined however to prefer the new recording because after all this is a most impassioned quartet, picturing the romance of the composer's old age, his love for the woman, so many years younger than himself, who seems also to have had an influence on the song-cycle, "The Diary of the young man who disappeared". For those who go in fear of modern chamber music let me add that this quartet, which dates from 1928, is not in twelve-note technique or anything like it, it is not deeply philosophical or so profound that you need twelve hearings to assess it, and it is not in the least gloomy. To me, this is an extremely moving piece of modern music very well played and recorded.

The Mozart quartet on the back is equally well played, at least as well as the Barbich (backing: Mozart's D minor, K.421) which was previously my choice. I think the Janacek players take the minuet too slowly; indeed they take it so slowly that they have to leave out second repeats in both main section and trio and even so take seven and a quarter minutes over it; it would have been nine and a quarter complete. Forty-four dotted minims to the minute is nowhere near the *allegro* for which Mozart asked. But the slow movement is a wonder and full of subtleties, while the fugal finale is polished and precise. And I must repeat that the quality is supremely good. A very fine disc in every way. R.F.

MOZART. Violin Sonatas. No. 17 in C major, K.296: No. 18 in G major, K.301: No. 21 in E minor, K.304. **Nathan Milstein** (violin), **Leon Pommers** (piano). Capitol P8452 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8½d. P.T.).

MOZART. Violin Sonatas. No. 18 in G major, K.301: No. 21 in E minor, K.304: No. 32 in B flat major, K.454. **Alexander Plocek** (violin), **Josef Palenicek** (piano). Supraphon LPV365 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

The Milstein disc contains three of the six violin sonatas Mozart wrote for his visit to Paris. The Plocek disc contains two or the same three plus a much later and bigger sonata he wrote in Vienna for an Italian violinist and guitarist called Regina Strinasacchi—and good female violinists were a great rarity in the eighteenth century, the piano and harp being considered more ladylike. The first performance of this B flat sonata (not E flat, as stated on the back of the sleeve) was a remarkable occasion, for Mozart had only had time to write out the violin part, and he played the piano part from an almost blank piece of paper; it was, of course, his unique ability to compose in his head down to the last detail that made this possible. The sonata contains some wonderful modulations in the slow movement, but is not otherwise very remarkable. The E minor, a short two-movement work full of restrained passion, is more interesting.

All the sonatas on these two discs have been recorded before, the C major recently by Schneiderhan and Seeman (DGM18307, reviewed in January).

Both the new discs are well played, well balanced and well recorded. The Czech players, I think, carry classical restraint a little too far, especially in the E minor. Plocek's bowing is perhaps more in the eighteenth century style than Milstein's, but I do not think one can approach this music as though nothing had been written since; though this may well be how it was played at the first performance we cannot help enjoying it more if the *Sturm und Drang* element is a little more emphasised. Milstein's slightly quicker tempo and more impassioned playing must surely give more pleasure. He too has classical restraint, and in some ways he gets nearer the style than the Czechs. He does not, for instance, give us a five-bar *rallentando* at the end of the first movement as do Plocek and Palenicek (a strange lapse), while the latter misinterprets the trill in bar 3 and elsewhere in the minuet. In this latter movement Milstein phrases the E major section beautifully, while on the rival disc traces of wow spoil the effect. In the little G major I can find little to choose between two enjoyable performances. Plocek's restraint is here more of an asset, and he phrases the last movement better, especially in the G minor section where his grace notes are more stylish and musical; and Milstein is inclined to bump the upbeats in the main tune.

Milstein and Pommers do wonders with the C major sonata on the back; I prefer

the excellent Schneiderhan version in the first movement, but there is nothing in it with the other two. The Czechs too are at their best in the longer work, in their case the B flat, which they play with unexpected virility.

The Capitol disc, which is banded (there are none on the Supraphon), gives the violinist a slightly closer balance and has a little more top. R.F.

MOZART. Violin Sonatas. No. 23 in D major, K.306: No. 25 in F major, K.377. **Wolfgang Schneiderhan** (violin), **Carl Seeman** (piano). D.G.G. DGM18281 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

The D major is the last and most showy of the violin sonatas Mozart wrote for his trip to Paris in 1778. Much of the piano writing is concertante in style, and in the last movement there is even a written out cadenza for the two instruments. There are mildly unusual constructional features; for instance, in the first movement the rather rapid first subject is omitted in the recapitulation, though briefly drawn on in the coda. The final rondo in two-four has contrasting sections in six-eight and common time; Mozart had tried this sort of thing in some of the violin concerto finales and the early E flat piano concerto, but he later gave it up. This finale is extremely effective while the slow movement is a beauty. In short, this is quite one of the best of the violin sonatas. The later F major is a good deal less interesting, though, needless to say, well worth this, its first recording. The opening tune is superficially like *Caro nome*, though in spirit the two are poles apart. The movement appears to be *forte* almost from start to finish; there is not a single *piano* anywhere. But Mozart was often careless about such things, especially when he was likely to be the pianist himself; in performance he must surely have made some gradations of tone. Schneiderhan and Seemann do not attempt any, and keep up a steady *forte*, even ignoring a solitary "decresc." near the end. The slow movement has a beautiful theme in D minor, but unfortunately the variations that follow never recapture its beauties. The final "Tempo di Menuetto" makes no great impression, though it contains one interesting touch: the coda is introduced by a sudden and very effective trick of modulation which oddly enough Mozart had tried out at the end of the slow movement of the other sonata on this disc (and later he tried it at the same structural point in the slow movement of the two-piano sonata). The trick consists of—but no, words are inadequate and dull for such a heaven-sent ingenuity. Compare, if you are interested, bars 160-1 of the F major finale with bars 76-7 of the D major slow movement; the parallel is remarkable. In this latter movement Schneiderhan has a rather shaky entry on his long-held "G" at the recapitulation; otherwise I noticed no lapse by either player in two splendid performances, classically restrained yet animated, and

beautifully balanced and recorded. This is ideal Mozart playing and I look forward to a complete set of the Mozart sonatas from this team. R.F.

RIDKY. Nonet No. 1, Op. 32. Czech Nonet (V. Zilka, flute; V. Vodicka, oboe; O. Pergl, clarinet; A. Charvat, horn; J. Rezac, bassoon; E. Lechner, violin; V. Kostecka, viola; R. Lojda, 'cello; O. Uher, double-bass). Supraphon LPM359 (10 in., 22s. 3d. plus 8s. 8d. P.T.).

With Jaroslav Ridky yet another name is added by Supraphon to the lists, amplifying agreeably our knowledge of Czech music. Extending from 1897 to 1957, Ridky's life was spent successively in military bands, as a student at the Prague Conservatoire, as harpist of the Czech Philharmonic, and finally back at the Conservatoire as a professor; this history is a continuo above which a series of compositions flowered, most of them in straightforward symphonic or chamber forms.

Among them the First Nonet of 1935 must take a high place, for throughout its four movements it is unfailingly lyrical yet vital music, conspicuously well laid out for the combination of instruments involved. This could very easily be made to sound awkward and unbalanced, for in the normal course of events four strings are no match for five wind; but by steering clear of solo cantabile lines for the upper strings, and using the group instead mostly as an accompanying medium, Ridky manages to avoid any possible unbalance completely. In this success he is of course on this occasion helped by a very good recording balance in the studio, and also by an extraordinarily good performance. The strings are everywhere alert, the wind everywhere mellifluous. The horn-player comes nearest to an occasional unintended prominence, yet makes amends by playing, within his style of a rather substantial vibrato, as beautifully as the instrument has ever been played.

The recording lacks something in brilliance, and in general is moderately satisfactory rather than outstandingly good. It scarcely, however, impairs very seriously the other substantial virtues of the disc.

M.M.

SCHUBERT. String Quartets. No. 14 in D minor, D.810, "Death and the Maiden"; No. 12 in C minor, D.703, "Quartettsatz". **Smetana Quartet** (Jiri Novak, Lubomir Kostecky, Jaroslav Rybensky, Antonin Kohout). Supraphon LPV308 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

Quartet No. 14:
Amadeus Quartet (1/54) ALP1088
Vienna Philharmonic Quartet (4/54) LGX66016
Armenian Quartet (11/55) 39CX1284
Koeckert Quartet (11/55) DGM18043
Hollywood Quartet (9/57) P8350
Budapest Quartet (12/57) ABL3177

There is no lack of poetry in the Smetana Quartet's playing of *Death and the Maiden*, and there is very often some conspicuously good intonation. But there may very reasonably be thought to be at times a considerable lack of vigour. Opening movement, scherzo, and finale will all respond to

a rather greater attack than is here in evidence; and the same may be said of the fill-up, the *Quartettsatz*. However, it is principally the poor recording that tells against the disc; the sound lacks depth and richness, varies somewhat in level, and is to be heard only against a background which is always too heavy, and sometimes actively disruptive.

Substantially better recorded sound is available from the Budapest Quartet's Philips disc, which also offers the *Quartettsatz* as a fill-up. Yet the seeker of the best available *Death and the Maiden*, who is prepared to forgo the *Quartettsatz*, should I think consider the virtues of the Hollywood Quartet's Capitol disc; for this combines with a first-class recording a very good performance indeed. The Amadeus Quartet also give a very good performance on their rather older H.M.V. disc, but here the quality of recording—though superior to that of the new Supraphon—is not quite the equal of that of the Capitol or Philips versions. M.M.

SCHUBERT. Sonata in B flat major for Piano Trio, D.28.

TCHAIKOVSKY. Piano Trio in A minor, Op. 50. London Alpha Trio (Natalia Karp, piano; Henriette Canter, violin; Regina Schein, 'cello). Vox PL11140 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

On the face of it, a valuable record. Tchaikovsky's Trio is a monument in two movements, the first an impassioned elegy, the second a fabulously inventive set of variations, in its way a textbook of Tchaikovsky's style. The whole thing is tremendously impressive in a good performance such as David Oistrakh and two colleagues gave in London a year ago.

The Schubert sonata is a one-movement piece dating from 1812 and only brought to light in 1923 after the complete edition of Schubert had been published; it's attractive in a gentle eighteenth century way, not really characteristic of Schubert.

Neither work is otherwise available at the moment. I am sure that when Kogan, Rostropovitch and Gilels play the Tchaikovsky trio this month some members of the audience will go into a record shop and ask for a record of this trio. And, sad to say, they will wonder what they saw in the piece. For the three ladies here recorded give a painfully demure account of it, altogether lacking in drama or passion, quite unexpensive—as if the composer were Mendelssohn at his dullest. The violinist's intonation is faulty and she often ignores Tchaikovsky's phrasing; the 'cello, apparently a good player, is balanced far in the background; the piano sounds like a schoolroom instrument, clanky and unlovely of tone, and Miss Karp is shy of using *sostenuto* pedal.

The little Schubert fill-up is carefully played, not always in tune, but again the acoustic and balance leave much to be desired. I am glad to see that Vox are recording over here and hope they will have better luck next time. Meanwhile this is not a worthy record of Tchaikovsky's trio.

A point of text: the players include all the passages that are marked as optionally cuttable in the score of Tchaikovsky's trio, until they reach the *variazione finale*, and then they make a cut of eleven pages that isn't one of the authorised ones! W.S.M.

INSTRUMENTAL

★**BRAHMS. Piano Sonata in F minor, Op. 5. Scherzo in E flat minor, Op. 4. Wilhelm Kempff** (piano), D.G.G. Stereophonic SLP138010 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

Kempff misses nothing whatever of the poetry of the sonata; yet he may be thought to miss something of its turbulence. In a sense it is reticent and elegant performance, likely to be wholly satisfactory to listeners sharing such a view of the music.

Only on two occasions, perhaps, does the reticence seem to be overdone. One is when the *andante* second movement, never less than beautifully played, does yet seem rather too leisurely. Requiring the theme in the fourth movement *andante molto*, it is reasonable to think that Brahms's inscription of "*Rückblick*" meant that an impression was intended of echoing the second movement in some degree, an effect undoubtedly the more convincing when that earlier second movement has borne a more markedly different character. The other rather reticent occasion is the whole, virtually, of the sonata's scherzo, but again the elegance of the performance is undeniable.

Rather more *brío* is added to the same degree of elegance in Kempff's playing of the separate E flat minor Scherzo; this, one of Brahms's earliest successes, is a very welcome bonus indeed. It has been secured without any observable concessions to quality of recording, for throughout the disc D.G.G. manage to offer first-class clarity, brilliance and piano tone. Some trifling want of depth might seem to call for comment; if so, it is only because of the outstanding technical excellence of the sound in all other respects. M.M.

BRAHMS. Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5. Intermezzos, Op. 117: No. 1 in E flat major; No. 2 in B flat minor; No. 3 in C sharp minor. **Geza Anda** (piano). Columbia 33CX1624 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8½d. P.T.).

Brahms wrote the F minor sonata when he was twenty, which was young enough for him to have splendidly ambitious ideas but too young for him to do justice to them. The first movement is the most ambitious of the five, and perhaps for that reason the most faulty. The different sections do not follow each other quite logically; they have not been wholly assimilated in the composer's imagination. But what magnificent stuff there is here! Stylistically and structurally the movement is all over the place, but youthful fire and vigour are everywhere in evidence. Anda makes it seem even more disjointed than usual by excessive rubato. The original is already so full of tempo indications (for instance, "*rit.*" occurs nine

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*Du bist die Ruh
Der Musensohn.*

WOLF: 'Michelangelo Leider'
*Wohl denk'ich oft; Alles endet, was entsteht;
Fuhlt meine Seele.*

R. STRAUSS: Sie wissen's nicht
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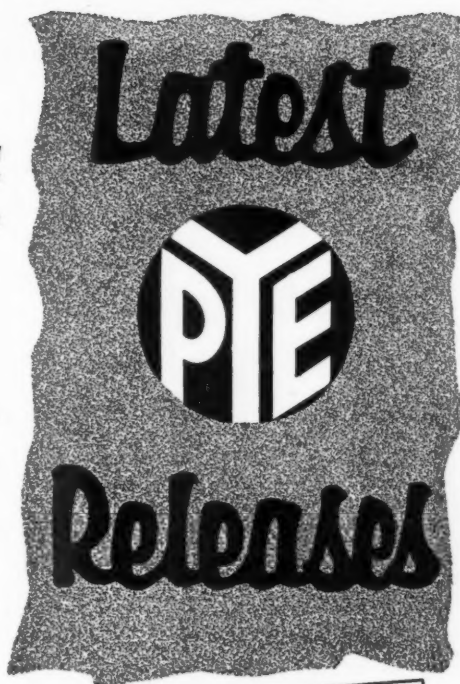
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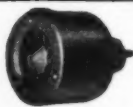
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A Questo Seno, K. 374


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Maria Stader · Soprano

Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra · Ferenc Fricsay
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times) that it is very difficult observing them all to give the piece the overall drive its themes seem to demand; if a whole lot more changes of tempo are introduced the music breaks to pieces. But he plays the slow movement exquisitely. I thought him too *espressivo* in the wonderful coda, but Brahms marks the section *molto espressivo* so it is really the composer rather than the pianist that I am daring to criticise. But I do feel this section is infinitely grander in a stricter tempo. I also felt Andä too wayward in the trio of the scherzo, where he seemed to be trying to put more poetry into the music than it would stand. In the finale he is again *rubato* at the wrong moment, as it seems to me, though only momentarily. Brahms is bent on disguising the precise moment his main theme returns for the first time; Andä points, or perhaps over-points, the precise moment and so spoils the effect. But this is a tiny detail, and he plays this movement very well indeed, holding the ideas tautly and logically together. He also plays the three Op. 117 intermezzos most poetically and without any straining after effect. The piano tone is superbly realised.

This, by the way, is the fifth recording of this sonata in the catalogue, and there is still no version available of the very-nearly-as-good first sonata in C major. R.F.

BRAHMS. Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel, Op. 24. Variations on a Theme by Paganini, Op. 35. Julius Katchen (piano). Decca LXT5484 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.).

Katchen's interpretation of the Brahms-Handel Variations has been in the catalogue since 1952, filling a ten-inch disc, Decca LX3078. This has now been withdrawn and replaced by the record now under review, on which the same work is offered more economically, filling one side of a twelve-inch and being backed by the two books of variations on a theme by Paganini. All this music is played with great panache and extremely well recorded. The Paganini theme is, of course, the one on which Liszt and Rachmaninov also wrote variations. It inspired Brahms to compose his most difficult work for solo piano, and Katchen surmounts the difficulties triumphantly. And he doesn't forget the music. These variations sometimes sound like technical exercises, but they don't here. Perhaps the most memorable part of the Handel Variations is the way Katchen builds up to the fugue at the end; the three variations just before it are put over with wonderful showmanship. I think myself that the little four-note figures with which the fugue subject opens should lead up to the fourth note of each; Katchen, at least on its first entry, seems to accent each note about equally. But the fugue as a whole goes splendidly. Brahms is extraordinarily casual about tempi in this work. He gives no indication as to how fast the theme itself should go (nor for that matter did Handel); thereafter it seems to be implied that each variation should be taken at the same speed as the theme (whatever that was) unless a hint to the contrary is given; for instance,

animato in Var. II, *con vivacità* in Var. VII, etc. But some of them just don't come off like this, and pianists generally are sometimes forced to invent tempi of their own. Thus Katchen takes the sliding chromatic Var. XX at his basic tempo of crotchet 60, which seems slow to me, goes up to crotchet 96 for XXI though Brahms indicates no change, returns to crotchet 60 for XXII, which again seems a bit slow, and then practically doubles the tempo for XXIII-XXV because the first of these (but only the first) is marked *vivace*. Quite a number of these variations will in fact come off at quite a number of different tempi, and one's choice can alter the structure and flow of the work as a whole. Katchen's choice seems as good as any, and none of the above is intended as a serious criticism of this excellent disc; rather it is a criticism of Brahms for leaving his intentions so vague. Though actually the uncertainty makes the work the more intriguing. R.F.

CHOPIN. Piano Sonata No. 2 in B flat minor, Op. 35.

LISZT. Piano Sonata in B minor, G.178: Leonard Pennario (piano). Capitol P8457 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8½d. P.T.).

Nothing Mr. Pennario does is dull or inefficient. Here, however, he is up against a couple of giants, and his interpretative faculties of intellect and sensibility, and even more of divination, don't measure up to them.

His touch is more suited to the Funeral March Sonata, and there are some poetic moments in his performance—the trio of the March, for instance. He's weak on pulse, so that the first movement doesn't follow through properly, and much of the windswept finale is a smudge. The feeling that won't make his reading last well, which a gramophone record must, is that the music doesn't amount to much. That finale is just a bit of music, not the ultimate desolation.

There's the same feeling about Liszt's B minor Sonata, and this is if anything more fatal. You can analyse the failings of the performance: pulse again—the first subject-group, up to the big D major tune, doesn't move forward irrevocably, it spurts. The ideas aren't inflected meaningfully. Above all the timing of this supremely dramatic music is careless; note-values and rests are clipped, and eventually the pianist seems heartless, which from his treatment of the D major tune he isn't.

Liszt's sonata is more difficult than this. I suspect that grave harm has been done to people's understanding of it by the famous Horowitz recording, simply because that was technically so stunning. Mr. Pennario isn't helped by a shallow piano tone recorded in a room of a size that Roy Brooks would advertise as "suit dwarf". W.S.M.

CHOPIN. Piano Works. Impromptus No. 1 in A flat major, Op. 29; No. 2 in F sharp major, Op. 36†; No. 3 in G flat major, Op. 51; No. 4 in C sharp minor, Op. 66, "Fantaisie Impromptu". **Berceuse** in D flat major, Op. 57. **Barcarolle** in F sharp minor, Op. 60. **Nocturne** No. 3 in B major, Op. 9, No. 3. **Scherzo** No. 3 in C sharp minor, Op. 39†. **Wilhelm Kempff (piano).** Decca LXT5451 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.).

★Decca Stereophonic SXL2024 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.).

†These two works are also available on a stereo EP—SEC506—reviewed last month.

Kempff is a reflective and an elegant player of Chopin; the qualities stand him in good stead in this second LP of what is obviously going to be a rewarding collected edition. For reflectiveness and elegance suit the Impromptus, the Berceuse, and the Nocturne very well indeed; and these are given most beautiful performances. So is the Barcarolle, with a fine shaping that places its climax exactly where it is wanted. Drama on anything approaching a substantial scale is scarcely called for by this music, except perhaps in the Scherzo; and here it might be thought that a stronger attack would have lent purpose to the music. More certainly I felt in this piece (as I did last month reviewing its EP version) that a strict observance of Chopin's pedal markings was an active handicap in presentation; for sometimes they are odd.

The recording is good, with clarity and good piano tone on offer throughout both versions of the disc. The clarity is particularly noticeable, of course, in the stereo; but in compensation, as it were, the mono version does offer slightly greater warmth of tone. In this mono version, however, the Nocturne suffers towards its end from a sudden patch of background rustle happily absent from the stereo version. M.M.

DUSSEK. Sonata in C minor.

SALZEDO. Chanson de la nuit. Nicanor Zabaleta (harp). D.G.G. EPL30310 (7 in., 12s. plus 4s. 8½d. P.T.).

As the sleeve is so remiss as to provide no information at all about these two works, I have done a little homework on them myself; no hardship, for Dussek has long been one of my favourite minor composers. He was of Czech origin, but spent most of his working life in London, until a publishing venture failed and he fled to Paris. He was playing his own piano concertos in some of the Salomon concerts at which Haydn's "London" symphonies were first performed. His music is remarkable for its variable quality; at times he reaches the heights, and his best music blazes with originality, but he can also write unmitigated drivel. Often he will touch both extremes within a single work, or even within a single movement. The little sonata that Zabaleta has recorded (and also edited; it is published by Schott) is unusual in that it strikes an even course between these extremes. It is also remarkably terse; Dussek is usually much more

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loquacious, and the possibility has crossed my mind that the editor has pruned the music here and there. I have no means of checking as it is taken from one of Dussek's few Paris publications and appears not to be in the British Museum. Zabaleta plays the music enchantingly.

Carlos Salzedo is a modern American composer of French extraction. He was born in 1885 and in recent years he has held professional appointments in New York and Philadelphia. He is also a harpist, as anyone would guess who listened to his *Chanson de la nuit*. The musical content may be slight, but the harp writing is superb. Impressionistic swishes, and misterioso swirls abound enchantingly, and the little piece shows us another side of Zabaleta's astonishing command of his instrument. The recording is splendid.

R.F.

RACHMANINOV. Variations on a Theme of Corelli, Op. 42. Preludes: No. 1 in C sharp minor, Op. 3, No. 2; No. 5 in D major, Op. 23, No. 4; No. 6 in G minor, Op. 23, No. 5; No. 7 in E flat major, Op. 23, No. 6; No. 16 in G major, Op. 32, No. 5; No. 23 in G sharp minor, Op. 32, No. 12. **Richard Farrell** (piano). Pye CCL30138 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.).

The *Variations on a Theme of Corelli* date from 1932, and thereafter, according to Grove, Rachmaninov wrote no more music for solo piano. The work has never achieved any sort of popularity, and will be as new to most listeners as it is to the U.K. catalogue. The Theme is the one known as "La Folia", and Corelli did not in fact write it, though he did compose variations on it for violin and harpsichord. Other composers of his day also made use of it, Vivaldi for one. With no very great confidence Grove hazards a Portuguese origin at least a century before Corelli. I recently found the tune in a book of Swedish folk-songs where it was called "Malcolm Sinclair", and a snatch of it was used near the end of *The Beggar's Opera*. The Italians all saw it as a vigorous dance tune. Rachmaninov on the other hand preferred it quiet, gentle and on the slow side, and thereby established the mood of the work he wishes to base on it. His Variations, truth to tell, sound a little tired here and there, and Richard Farrell exaggerates this failing by his slow tempi. I must add that there are some very attractive *scherzando* variations in the dry vein of the Paganini Rhapsody, and these are nicely played, but the *agitato* ones in dotted nine-eight rhythm needed far more vigour and speed, both for their own sake and also to give the work as a whole more solidity. There is one superb adagio variation, but one or two sections that struck me as very banal; the final "Coda" is particularly poor. Farrell plays much of this music better than it deserves, but he was never at his best in impetuous music, and a more galvanised performer might have made this rather weak-kneed work more convincing as a whole.

On the other hand Farrell's ability to ruminate and poetise makes the selection

of preludes on the other side a delight. He plays the C sharp minor as though he had just come on it fresh, without any preconceptions about Fate knocking on coffins or whatever it is. This is not a particularly exciting performance, but it is intensely musical. His tone colours vary from piece to piece, and he is wonderfully intent on showing you the beauty of every phrase—or rather on showing himself, for he never gives the impression of playing to an audience.

The recording quality is a little dry, but pleasant. On reading over the above I feel I may have under-rated the Variations. Try them and see for yourself. R.F.

SCHEIDT. Tabulatura Nova: Psalmus "Da Jesus an dem Kreuze stund"; Fantasy "Ich ruf zu dir Herr Jesu Christ"; Hymnus "Christe, qui lux es et dies"; (a) Modus ludendi pleno organo pedaler; (b) Kyrie dominicale IV Tonus cum Gloria; (c) *Benedicamus*. **Michael Schneider** (organ) with (b) *Ensemble of Students of the State Music Academy, Freiburg* directed by **Herbert Froitzheim**. D.G.G. Archive APM14087 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.). Recorded on the Praetorius Organ, Freiburg.

Before Samuel Scheidt published, at Hamburg, his *Tabulatura Nova* in 1624, German organists had been accustomed to read their music from an alphabetical notation. Scheidt substituted for this unsatisfactory method a true keyboard notation which put each part on a stave of five lines. He was one of the first composers to write independent pedal parts and to depart from the universal German practice of "colouring" melodies sacred and secular with meaningless passages all formed on the same pattern. His setting of the Passion chorale *Da Jesus an dem Kreuze stund* (When on the Cross the Saviour hung) consists of six presentations of the melody, the fifth with a florid counter-melody, the sixth with chromatic harmonies. There is no correspondence with the verses of the chorale (which are concerned with the seven last words of Christ), but a working out of purely musical ideas. In *Ich ruf zu dir Herr Jesu Christ* (I call on Thee Lord Jesus Christ), which is subtitled *Fantasia*, the melody is given different rhythmic treatment in each of the five sections. In the short piece that begins the second side of the disc Scheidt displays a method of registering full organ with pedals. The Praetorius organ has a very mellow tone and beautiful solo stops and Michael Schneider seems to me to play these pieces, and those in the Mass settings, with true understanding of the style and with feeling for the generally quiet beauty of the music.

It was the custom both in the Catholic and Lutheran churches to alternate organ with voices in the so-called Organ Masses, not a satisfactory proceeding liturgically or artistically, but one that did produce a great deal of fine music. The male choir sing very brief plainsong phrases of *Kyrie*, more substantial portions of *Gloria* (the only two sections of the Ordinary used by the

Lutherans) with the organ providing polyphonic section based on the plainsong. The *Benedicamus Domino* (incorrectly used from the liturgical point of view) is for organ only. This is a rewarding disc, very well recorded and, though there are a few monotonous patches, containing much beautiful music. Historically it is of the greatest interest for with Scheidt, as Bukofzer says, "German organ music came into its own". A.R.

E. POWER BIGGS. Clarke. A Trumpet Voluntary. Purcell. Voluntary in C major. Parry. Choral Prelude—Melcombe. Bach. Komm Süßer Tod. Schubert. Litany for the Feast of All Souls. E. Power Biggs (organ). Philips ABE10096 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3½d. P.T.).

This anthology is entitled "Cathedral Music". No indication is given of the instrument used by Mr. Biggs for this recording, but it does not sound very much like a cathedral organ, nor even a parish church acoustic. Not everyone will approve of Mr. Biggs' style of playing in the Purcell and Clarke items: there are some very odd chords and registrations. But the music is a not unpleasant mixture of English and German organ music, and it may possibly make some converts to this "submerged treasury with but a few exposed surfaces", to quote the sleeve note. D.S.

SASCHA GORODNITZKI. La Campanella (Liszt). Consolation No. 3 (Liszt). Polonaise in A major (Chopin). Preludes (Debussy): Book 1, No. 8, "La fille aux cheveux de lin"; Book 2, No. 24, "Feux d'artifice". Etude in G flat (Chopin). Alt Wien (Godowsky). The Contrabandist (Schumann). Barcarolle, Op. 10, No. 3 (Rachmaninov). Prelude in E flat minor, Op. 23, No. 9 (Rachmaninov). Gavotte, Op. 32 (Prokofiev). Suggestion Diabolique, Op. 4, No. 4 (Prokofiev). Minuet, Op. 14, No. 1 (Paderewski). Sascha Gorodnitzki (piano). Capitol P8374 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8½d. P.T.).

Sascha Gorodnitzki is an American pianist, who, according to the sleeve-note, has been concertising in America for some years. He has a great deal of technique and very little power of projecting the music. The piano sounds a little hard but the quality is adequate. R.F.

MINDRU KATZ. Bach. Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue, BWV903 (arr. Fischer): Toccata in D major, BWV912 (arr. Busoni): Chorale Prelude "Nun komm der heiden Heiland", BWV659 (arr. Kempff). Haydn. Arietta in A major with twelve variations H.XVII, No. 2. Beethoven. 32 Variations in C minor, G.191. Mindru Katz (piano). Pye CCL30143 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.).

Mindru Katz is the young Rumanian whose first disc, reviewed last May, was mainly devoted to the piano suite by his compatriot Enesco. He is without doubt a

very great pianist in the making. He commands attention with every note he puts down. His playing of the Beethoven C minor variation is very intense and very exciting and very brilliant, and I hope in due course to hear him give a tremendous performance of the "Emperor", and indeed of all the sonatas and concertos. His Bach, which is very good indeed, is inevitably Pianist's Bach—note that all three works in the title are "arranged" by someone, though I should add that Fischer and Busoni have done little more than edit the music with which their names are associated. The Haydn seems the least successful. Katz tries to do too much with the music and he has not really come to terms with its style. He keeps bumping upbeat for some reason and he might have varied the rather tedious repeats a little more. Incidentally, of the eighteen variations that Haydn wrote he only plays I to XI and XV. There is some distortion on my copy at the end of the Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue, and in the middle of the Toccata the pitch of the piano seems to alter fractionally, for which I cannot account at all. Otherwise the quality is satisfactory. R.F.

JOHN WILLIAMS. Bach. Suite No. 3 in C major for unaccompanied violoncello (transcribed Duarte). **Albéniz.** Torre Bermeja. **Ponce.** Three Mexican Popular Songs. **Villa-Lobos.** Etude No. 1 in E minor. **Crespo.** Norteña. **Duarte.** Variations on a Catalan Folk Song "Canço del Llabre", Op. 25. **John Williams** (guitar). Delysé ECB3149 (12 in., 28s. 6d. plus 11s. 14d. P.T.).

With this record the young English guitarist makes a conspicuously successful first appearance on disc. The standards of competition are high; for many years now Segovia and his successors have accustomed us to very high standards of musicianship and technique. Williams is fully the equal of this competition, and his record actually the superior to most others in the field in at least one respect: very good programme arrangement avoids the monotony always waiting round the corner to catch the 12-inch LP of solo guitar music off its guard.

For one side of this disc is actually devoted to one classical major work, the other to several Spanish-style minor pieces, leading up by way of climax to a rather more substantial final one. This is John Duarte's set of variations on *Canço del Llabre*; the variations claiming a harmonic idiom free from specifically Spanish limitations, yet fully in keeping with the theme. In this theme Williams' playing is perhaps at its most expressive; but throughout the Spanish pieces it is intensely musical, nowhere sacrificing beauty of tone or line to the production of any specifically exciting effect.

The style, which admittedly places a few moments of seeming reticence alongside many of substantial beauty, illuminates the Bach 'cello suite quite ideally. In this it is greatly helped by an excellent arrangement, Duarte takes the music up a major sixth, restoring its resonance by adding an independent bass line where the 'cello line

at its new pitch seems to call for it. Few other alterations are made in Bach's text; the tasteful arrangement, sensitive playing, and first-class recording (in evidence throughout the disc) combine to make this one of the pleasantest ways of listening to Bach unaccompanied string sonatas imaginable. M.M.

RUGGIERO RICCI. Achron. Hebrew Melody. **Bazzini.** La Ronde des lutins, Op. 25. **Chopin.** Nocturne No. 20, Op. Posth. (trans. Milstein). **Elgar.** La Capricieuse, Op. 17. **Hubay.** The Zephyr, Op. 30, No. 5. **Kroll.** Banjo and Fiddle. **Moskowski.** Guitare, Op. 45, No. 2 (trans. Sarasate). **Sarasate.** Jota aragonesa, Op. 27. **Smetana.** From the Homeland, No. 2. **Suk.** Burleska, Op. 17, No. 4. **Vecsey.** Le Vent. **Wieniawski.** Scherzo-Tarantelle, Op. 16. **Ruggiero Ricci** (violin). Decca LXT5460 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 24d. P.T.).

Where are the violinist-composers of today? Where is Menuhin's *Valsette oubliée*, and Heifetz's *Echoes of Splozacak*? Surely Campoli has a *Tarantella diabolica* up his sleeve. The more recent of the great wars seems to have dried the springs; violinists are suddenly coy and reticent about their creations, presumably because the demand for these trifles has vanished. But has it vanished? The record companies don't seem to think so. Here are Decca issuing what they call "Ruggiero Ricci Virtuoso Showpieces" and there have been several other discs of this kind in recent months.

It is hard to imagine a better example than this. Ricci plays the assortment stupendously well, and some of the pieces are prodigiously difficult; notably *Le Vent*, the silliest piece I have heard in years. Not all the music is bad. The Smetana is interesting, and the *Achron Hebrew Melody* has real beauty. Ricci's New York upbringing perhaps helped to give him understanding of Elgar's style, elusive to foreigners even in his lighter moments. *Banjo and Fiddle* is attractive nonsense. Inhibited by years of symphony concerts I find it difficult to confess I thoroughly enjoyed some of these pieces, but that is about the truth of it. Ernest Lush does his um-cha accompaniments very ably, only just hanging on by his eyelids in the Suk. The recording is excellent. R.F.

CHORAL AND SONG

BACH. Cantatas. No. 56, "Ich will den Kreuzstab gerne tragen", BWV56: No. 82, "Ich habe genug", BWV82. **Gérard Souzay** (baritone), **Geraint Jones Singers and Orchestra** conducted by **Geraint Jones**. H.M.V. ALP1670 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 84d. P.T.).

Conried as above:
Fischer-Dieskau, Berlin Motet Choir and Orch.,
Ristenpart (11/54) APM14004

Gérard Souzay is one of those rare artists whose technique and powers of persuasion are so perfectly integrated that most listeners would welcome from him songs of any genre and in any language. He is



Gérard Souzay (E.M.I. Photo)

indeed at home in many musical spheres, and his wide understanding of French repertoire from Machaut to Ravel is complemented by his excursions into the Lieder of Schubert, Schumann and Wolf. Now he enters, boldly and with ample self-assurance, the very difficult and to some extent specialised field of Bach cantatas, choosing the same two works that Fischer-Dieskau recorded five years ago with the Berlin Motet Choir and Orchestra.

Souzay's voice, although basically a lightish baritone, is sufficiently adaptable to give an excellent account of Bach's sometimes cruelly extended melismas, and in range it is wide enough to take in the occasional low G as well as high E's and F's. Yet it remains a lyrical voice, with associations that may possibly disturb some listeners, though they did not worry this reviewer in the slightest.

I am thinking of such passages as the wonderful peroration to the first recitative of the *Kreuzstab* Cantata: "so tret'ich aus dem Schiff", which offers tremendous possibilities in the matter of dramatic and dynamic expression. Fischer-Dieskau treats this purely narrative passage with possibly too much vehemence, whereas Souzay manages to convey the inherent drama of the analogy between man's journey through life and a ship's passage through a storm-swept sea, without losing sight of the true climax of the paragraph—"aus vieler Trübsal"—and its touching cadence. Incidentally in this recitative Geraint Jones uses the organ as continuo instrument, providing adequate sustaining power at the end, whereas Ristenpart silences the harpsichord and leaves us the bare bones of soloist and basses, which is not, I think, very effective or very accurate historically. There is a further example of Jones's more imaginative approach to the question of which continuo instrument to use in the aria immediately following, set for soloist, oboe obbligato and continuo. He rightly chooses the bassoon, thus providing a perfect reed bass to the oboe and a welcome

change of colour from all that has gone before. Ristenpart sticks to the ubiquitous 'cello and bass combination, which sounds woolly and quite at variance with the keen tone of the oboe.

A word about the oboe obbligato in both cantatas: Töttcher, in the D.G.G. recording, plays well but tends to break up phrases more than Jones's oboist, Edward Selwyn. In the H.M.V. recording the oboe is rather more forward, though it never obscures the voice, and its tone is warmer and sweeter, in fact more lyrical, thus matching the prevailing impression of Souzay's voice. The recording of the H.M.V. performance is in general warmer and fuller in tone, and the use of harpsichord and organ, as well as offering the choice of bassoon and 'cello on the continuo line, is extremely effective and satisfying. The H.M.V. record, by the way, is divided into bands, but the D.G.G. is not.

Souzay's performance of *Ich habe genug* is once again masterly and convincing, and his German is excellent. I liked especially the final aria, "Ich freue mich", with its joyous and flowery passages sung by Souzay with great sensitivity and lightness. If you missed the earlier record, I would recommend this performance by reason of its thoughtful presentation and its overall musicianship and excellence of recording acoustic. D.S.

BACH. Mass in B minor, BWV232.

Lois Marshall (soprano), Hertha Töpper (contralto), Peter Pears (tenor), Kim Borg (bass), Hans Braun (bass), Rudolf Koeckert (violin), Karl Benzinger (D trumpet), Kurt Richter (D horn), Karl Bobzien (flute), Kurt Kalmus and Wilhelm Grimm (oboe d'amore), Josef Merz ('cello), Franz Höger (double bass), Margarethe Scharitzer (harpsichord), Anton Nowakowski (organ), Bavarian Radio Orchestra and Chorus (Chorus Master: Kurt Prestel) conducted by Eugen Jochum. Fontana CFL1028-9 (two 12 in., 60s. plus 23s. 6d. P.T.).

Karajan (2/54) 33CX1121-3
Thomas (12/55) OL50094-6

At the inevitable expense of some end-of-side deterioration, the B minor Mass is at last available in complete form on only two records, in a performance that might have been a good deal better but is in fact tolerable. It is no small engineering achievement to present a two-hour performance on four sides, and for those who want to compare the layout with the other recordings of this work by Karajan and Thomas, here is the Fontana scheme: Side 1—*Kyrie . . . bonae voluntatis* (1-4); Side 2—*Laudamus te . . . in gloria Dei patris. Amen* (5-11); Side 3—*Credo . . . apostolicam ecclesiam* (12-18); Side 4—*Gloria . . . Dona nobis pacem* (19-24). The numbers in parentheses refer to standard scores of this work.

When A.R. reviewed the earlier versions, he expressed some misgivings about listening to such a lengthy work and hinted more than once at its unevenness. The B minor Mass is certainly difficult to listen to, and I think there are many reasons for this.

One is that there is no real sense of unity in the work, and the reappearance of the *Gratias* in the guise of *Dona nobis pacem* is no unity, but simply a convenient and ill-fitting parody. This lack of unity is reflected in the casting difficulties that concert-givers and recording companies must face when they decide to present this work in complete form. This new disc, for example, indulges in the luxury of two bass soloists, Kim Borg and Hans Braun, presumably because the tessitura of *Et in spiritum sanctum* is higher than that of *Quoniam*. Notice that I say the tessitura, or general compass of the voice, is higher; the extreme range—top E—is the same in both, and Bach uses it in *Quoniam* only at the two appearances of the word "altissimus", properly enough. Yet a good baritone should be able to sing both arias comfortably, which is more than can be said for the unfortunate lady who has to cope with the top F-sharp in the second soprano part of *Christe eleison* and the low G's of *Et in unum Dominum*.

I was not very impressed by Lois Marshall, Fontana's soprano: her voice is insufficiently cool and flexible for polyphony of this kind. Schwarzkopf, on the Columbia set, is absolute perfection, for her clear and steady voice and her musical phrasing assist her in blending into the texture, so that we sometimes wonder whether Schwarzkopf is playing obbligato to the flute or vice-versa. This is as it should be, for in polyphony (even as late as Bach's) there should be no dominating voice or timbre. An operatic wobble is hardly acceptable, nor is Fontana's contralto, Hertha Töpper, who may be all very well for Wagner, but she won't do for Bach. When Töpper and Marshall wobble together, which means out of phase, the effect is painful. The soloists in the Oiseau-Lyre recording are also poor in this respect and there is some flat singing from the soprano.

Peter Pears, usually so successful in Bach, seems a little unhappy in this Fontana disc, and I think the reason may be that his voice is unsympathetically recorded. He brings great artistry to the *Benedictus*, but seems not to blend well with the soprano in *Domine Deus*. Neither of the two bass singers impresses me very much. They make a joyful noise unto the Lord, and that is about all. I seek in vain for subtleties of phrasing, for sustained lines of the type that Fischer-Dieskau can give us so effortlessly. And I still wonder whether two basses are really necessary.

The best portions of the new version are, to my mind, the choral ones. Most of the choral writing in the B minor Mass is five-part, and it is therefore very easy to let us hear the first sopranos and the basses, and a kind of murky mass in the middle which may or may not consist of second sopranos, altos, and tenors. Bach's bass line is always heavily doubled by instruments: 'cellos, basses and organ, and sometimes bassoons as well. Thus the number of bass voices can often profitably be reduced. The sopranos, being on top of the entire texture, will always be heard; not so the other voices, and it is these that are in need of some strengthening or

support. I do not know what numbers are involved in the Bavarian Radio Chorus, but the effect is one of good balance, even if there is something to wish for in the clarity of words. In the Columbia set I find the chorus far too distant to be at all impressive. This is a pity, since the soloists, both vocal and orchestral, are almost perfect; and even if Karajan is not your ideal Bach conductor he can hypnotize you into thinking that he is.

In my view there is much more that we need to know about the B minor Mass. And it needs a good clean-up. One of the clearest and most impressive performances I have heard was in New York about two months ago; the choir numbered about 24, and the orchestra was roughly the same size. For once it was actually possible to hear what Bach wrote. But the Fontana issue will be welcomed by Bach-lovers with modest budgets. If they have a light pick-up, they should get very fair results. D.S.

★BACH. Cantata No. 54, "Widerstehe doch der Sünde". St. Matthew Passion, BWV244: "Erbarme dich mein Gott". Cantata No. 53, "Schlage doch, gewünschte Stunde". Cantata No. 200, BWV223, "Bekennen will ich seinen Namen". Helen Watts (contralto), Philomusica of London directed by Thurston Dart. London L'Oiseau-Lyre Stereophonic SOL60003 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.). Mono: (10/58) OL50169.

I do not think the stereo recording of these Bach cantatas has any advantage over the mono. It is, no doubt, a little more spacious but sounds over-bright in tone. Helen Watts' fine voice has acquired a slight edge and in the aria from the *St. Matthew Passion* the pizzicato bass is better defined in the mono.

I would myself choose the earlier recording of these admirable performances as being the more musical sounding of the two without, however, over-emphasising the point. A.R.

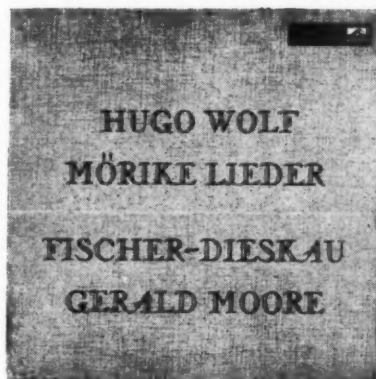
HANDEL. Alcina: "Tornami a vagheggiar"; "Ombre pallide". Esther: "Tune your harps"; "Turn not, O Queen". Jeptha: Sinfonia; Symphony. Rodrigo: Suite; Overture; Gigue; Sarabande; Air; Minuet I; Matelot; Minuet II; Bourrée. Joan Sutherland (soprano), William Herbert (tenor), Hervey Alan (bass), Philomusica of London conducted by Anthony Lewis.

London L'Oiseau-Lyre OL50170 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.).

★London L'Oiseau-Lyre Stereophonic SOL60001 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.).

The separation of the two arias from *Alcina* can only be due to the fact that the compiler of the items thought the listener would play this side of the disc straight through and needed the contrast of the arias from *Esther*, which are sandwiched in the middle. This is not a practice to be commended and could have been avoided on

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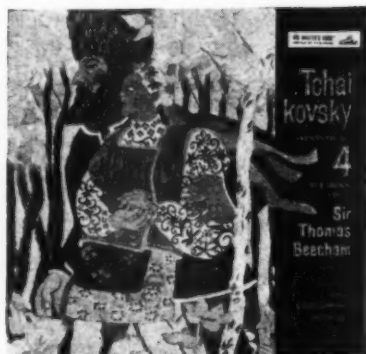
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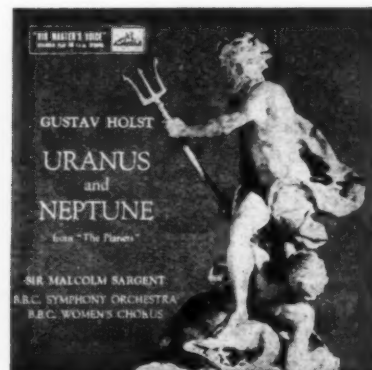
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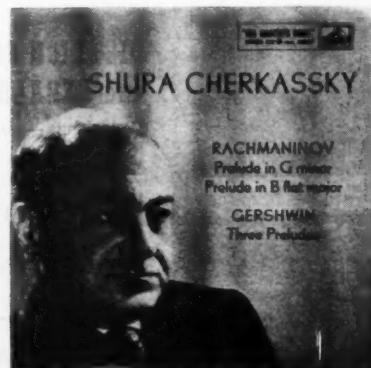
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the grounds of contrast by not choosing two florid arias from the opera but substituting a purely melodic one, such as the lovely "Mià restano le lagrime" for the first and rather less interesting one.

This small complaint over I welcome warmly Joan Sutherland's fresh and beautifully toned singing and the clarity of the florid passages in these arias: but I hope she will give more value than she does at present to her consonants in, for example, such words as "mià", or "ombre"; a lot can be done with these m's! The second aria is preceded by a dramatic recitative. William Herbert sings his lovely aria "Tune your harps" with excellent tone and a good legato, and rightly decorates the first part of the air at the *da capo* just as Miss Sutherland adds little cadenzas at the conclusions of her two arias.

Hervy Alan sings very expressively in the *arioso* in which Haman pleads for his life and both these arias from *Esther* have fine orchestral accompaniments.

The reverse side of the disc has on it purely orchestral music, all of it attractive and very well played but, perversely, I would have preferred at least one or two more vocal pieces from the operas, the least known field of Handel's music.

The recording of both mono and stereo versions is very good. Both are a little unkind to Miss Sutherland's loud high notes, the pizzicato accompaniment to "Tune your harps" is better defined on stereo and the oboe separates itself better from its surroundings. The oboe player, by the way, might well have been given a credit for his admirable playing. In the orchestral items the mono disc has more body of tone and more bass, but is less spacious. There is, in general, little to choose between the two versions. Both of them will give great enjoyment. A.R.

JANACEK. Diary of a Young Man who disappeared. Stepanak Stepanova (soprano), Benno Blachut (tenor), Josef Palenicek (piano), Female Ensemble of the Czech Singers' Chorus. Supraphon LPV319 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

Häfliger, Cane Meyer, de Nobel (11/55) ABR4041

Janacek's only song cycle is based on verses published in a Brno newspaper in 1916; these are supposed to have been found in a diary left by a farmer's son who had had an affair with a gypsy girl and run away with her "to redeem his guilt" and look after their child. Somewhat parallel incidents in the composer's own life at the time perhaps helped him to set these verses with an intensity and beauty that makes this cycle one of the unquestioned masterpieces of this century. The tenor represents the young man, the alto the gypsy; a female chorus comments in two lovely and more lengthy songs just before the climax, in the middle an erotic piano solo. Some of the songs have an almost Moussorgsky-like flavour but the very short themes flashing with beauty could only be by Janacek, and the close welding of vocal line and words is also characteristic.

The old Philips recording was made

during the Holland Festival of 1954. Inevitably one or two little things go wrong, things that would have been set right in a studio recording, but the performance is alive and satisfying. The new recording is a larger disc costing over ten shillings more. It is studio-made and nothing goes wrong; the female choir is much better balanced; the original Czech words are sung, and the performance is presumably more authentic—though the pianist several times departs from the printed text both as regards dynamics and rests. Blachut is not, I think, so naturally gifted a singer as Häfliger, and his upper notes are sometimes too emasculated when he is singing quietly. But on the whole he is more inside the music, and captures its intensity better; his agonised high Cs at the end are searing—in the way the composer meant them to be. The alto too is magnificent, as is the pianist. This is a realised performance by people who believe in the music and understand it. I find the whole cycle intensely moving. It has reality. It is life. You may or may not think this has anything to do with great music; perhaps it hasn't. But there is a difference; these words are one degree nearer the truth than, say, those of *Die schöne Müllerin*, which are an imitation of life. Janacek somehow captures this realism in musical notes.

I strongly recommend this disc, though I am not quite sure if it is worth the extra money; especially as the Philips throws in an excellent English translation. But either version is something to treasure. The recording quality is well above average for this firm. The sleeve note, incredibly, describes these songs as "genial". R.F.

HANDEL. Solo Cantata for Bass and Continuo, "Dalla Guerra Amorosa". Hans Olaf Hudemann (bass), August Wenzinger ('cello) and Fritz Neumeyer (harpsichord). D.G.G. Archive EPA37118 (7 in., 12s. plus 4s. 8½d. P.T.).

This is one of the few solo works for bass among Handel's chamber cantatas. The bass voice had not the place in Italian opera it was to assume in the composer's oratorios, and being mainly associated with minor *buffo* parts was not likely to be at home in the fashionable salons for which the cantatas were written.

This little work consists of a recitative and aria on each side of the disc and is well sung and played; but one would never guess that the theme of the text, as Anthony Lewis tells us in his excellent chapter on the cantatas in *The Handel Symposium*, is "an ironical warning against the perils of love". It requires, as he says, "a singer with a lively personality to do full justice to its malicious humour", but Mr. Hudemann does not appear to be such a singer. A.R.

LOEWE. Songs. Der Nöck: Heinrich der Vogler: Prinz Eugen. Josef Greindl (bass), Hertha Klust (piano). D.G.G. EPL30207 (7 in., 12s. plus 4s. 8½d. P.T.).

Carl Loewe's ballads are immensely important as contributions to the evolution

of the German Lied. Some of them are highly effective as music (for instance his *Erlkönig*), some are rather tedious and of course highly repetitive. I suggest that this record will mean nothing much to you unless you have an understanding of German, not more, say, than a long Scots ballad might mean to a Bantu. They are essentially pieces of story telling. The German operatic bass Josef Greindl sings them expressively—the bland and jolly *King Henry* and *Prince Eugen* the valiant *knight* are the best. The other long ballad is about the Nöck (it would seem a male water fairy of some sort, given to harping; but I speak under correction). It is rather carelessly sung. The bass lets himself run out of breath in one place, though a repeat of the testing passage shows that he has learnt that more support was needed and has calculated accordingly. But it is hardly a performance to be proud of and rather heavy going. As D.G.G. vouchsafes no word of explanation or even translation for an English buyer I pass on the information that you will find the words of *Der Nöck*, a poem by Kopisch, as No. 298 of the Oxford Book of German Verse. The Nöck lives in the waterfall, is addressed lovingly by the nightingale but is frightened away by rude boys; but returns and sings again, far into the night. I like the style, with the harping accompaniment and the to and fro of question and answer.

P.H.-W.

ORFF. Carmina Burana. Sylvia Stahlman (soprano), John Ferrante (tenor), Morley Meredith (baritone), Hartford Symphony Choral and Orchestra conducted by Fritz Mahler. Vanguard PVL7079 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.).

E. Jochum (3/55) DG16045-6
Sawallisch (10/57) 33CX1480

It is hard to summon admiration for Carl Orff's principles of composition, but when it comes to the point one can often enjoy the *joie de vivre* that they exude; and of no work is this more true than the *Carmina Burana* which unite timelessly beautiful and human poetry with Orff's best tunes and most captivating rhythms. You don't miss the staging that the mind's eye supplies with his true stage works—for the *Carmina*, though stageable, don't musically imply action on a stage.

This is to say that I enjoy playing a record of the *Carmina Burana*; the record I enjoy playing, however, is not quite this one. The solo baritone has a taut, exciting vocal colour and a good sense of the idiom. The brass at the start of "Were diu welt alle min" are resplendent, and once or twice Fritz Mahler shows a sympathy for Orff's pulses, but the chorus is much too backward, the soprano flat in her liquescent solo, the boys sound as if they were bolstered by mature female voices, the tenor in his pathetic swan song makes an uncomfortable but not musical noise, the German Latin is imitated but only with 80 per cent accuracy (why not English Latin?). In a word, the new version doesn't begin to survive competition with the two existing recorded versions. Of these Columbia is the cheaper

and sounds more euphonious; the D.G.G. is a cumbersome investment, but has particularly good enunciation. Both are performed with the vitality and good balance that the new set just misses. W.S.M.

PURCELL. The Tempest: "Arise ye subterranean winds"; "Acolus, you must appear"; "Your awful voice I hear"; "Halcyon days"; "See, see, the Heavens smile". **Trumpet Sonata.**

The Virtuous Wife: March; Minuet I; Minuet II. **Diocletian:** "What shall I do"; Chaconne in D minor. **Hervey Alan** (bass), **William Herbert** (tenor), **Jennifer Vyvyan** (soprano), **Philomusica of London** conducted by **Anthony Lewis**.

London L'Oiseau-Lyre OL50171 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.).

★London L'Oiseau-Lyre Stereophonic SOL60002 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.).

Here is a pleasant Purcell omnibus, well in time for this year's festivities and well played by the Philomusica of London conducted by Anthony Lewis. One side is entirely devoted to music that Purcell wrote for a revival of *The Tempest* in 1695. The highly competent soloists, Hervey Alan, William Herbert and Jennifer Vyvyan make the most of the dramatic and lyrical elements in these delightful excerpts.

One aspect of Purcell's assimilation of Italian fashions may be seen in the Trumpet Sonata, a recent discovery from York Minster Library. The brilliance and optimism of Cazzati and Torelli are here recaptured in a recognisably English translation, though Purcell (like all good translators) has brought something of his own style and understanding to a genre which was all but unknown to his countrymen. The soloist, Dennis Egan, produces a good, rounded tone and phrases nicely; but his trills are too fast and somewhat out of tune. His predecessors had no valves to trill with, but they could produce a good slow trill with acceptable intonation.

The incidental music to D'Urfey's *The Virtuous Wife* is well known but nevertheless welcome, and the playing of the Philomusica is here on a very high level. They accompany Jennifer Vyvyan with intelligence and sensitivity in a charming aria from *Diocletian*, and the side ends with a performance of the Chacony in G minor. I found the stereo version warmer and more lifelike than the mono disc, especially in the vocal items and in the Trumpet Sonata. The sleeve note by Anthony Ford is good, in spite of his faintly tautological mention of the movement in which "the trumpet is tacet". D.S.

RAMEAU. Three Cantatas.

L'Impatience: Diane et Actéon: Orphée. **Elisabeth Verlooy** (soprano), **Ulrich Grehling** (violin), **Johannes Koch** (viola da gamba), **Rudolf Ewerhardt** (harpsichord). D.G.G. Archive APM14116 (12 in. 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

★D.G.G. Archive Stereophonic SAPM198001 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

It seems that the voice of Elisabeth Verlooy has not previously been recorded on commercial discs available in England. She has a pretty voice, very flexible, and intelligently used, though sometimes insufficiently steady on high notes at the ends of phrases. There is a slight tendency towards sameness of timbre and dynamic, which (at the end of a long-playing series of Rameau cantatas) can be a disadvantage. But the voice is fresh and pleasant, and my advice is to hear the cantatas one by one, with a suitable interval in between each.

This disc fills very successfully a long-felt gap in the catalogues, for, though Rameau appears to be well represented, we have in fact only his operas, keyboard works, and *Pièces de clavecin en concert*. These chamber cantatas constitute a delightful and significant part of his output: they show his indebtedness to Italian models and at the same time his ardent desire to create a purely French style. The correct manner of singing French music of this epoch is beset with the most dreadful difficulties, as anyone knows who has studied Jane Arger's book on the ornamentation of this period in France's musical development. The singer of this Archive disc is however well informed in these matters of interpretation, and her performances are convincing as well as delightful. There is a skilled little group to accompany her, and the balance and recording are both admirable.

L'Impatience is a delicious pastoral; the other two cantatas deal with classical subjects in an endearing French manner. I would recommend this disc in either stereo or mono (but if possible the former, which is more lifelike) to all who admire French music of the age of Louis XV. D.S.

SCHUBERT. Lieder. An Sylvia (Shakespeare). Schwanengesang: No. 10, "Das Fischermädchen" (Rellstab); No. 4, "Ständchen" (Rellstab); No. 12, "Am Meer" (Heine). Nachlass: Lfg. 13, "An mein Herz" (Schulze); Lfg. 7, "Hippolit's Lied" (Schopenhauer); Lfg. 10, "Litanei" (Jacobi); Lfg. 20, "Im abendroth" (Lappe). Frühlingslaube, Op. 20, No. 2 (Uhlend). An die Laute, Op. 81, No. 2 (Rochlitz). Der Wanderer, Op. 4, No. 1 (Schmidt). An die Musik, Op. 88, No. 4 (Schober). Fischerweise, Op. 96, No. 4 (Schlechte). Heidenröslein, Op. 3, No. 3 (Goethe). Erbkönig, Op. 1 (Goethe). **Norman Foster** (bass-baritone), **Heinrich Schmidt** (piano). Pye CCL30124 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.).

Unlike the mixed recital which is reviewed below, Norman Foster here sings exclusively Schubert, taking it, at some moments a

shade too easy (his accompanist is never one to set the pace and keep it in a *positive* way such as Gerald Moore will adopt). It is, as I hope I made plain in reviewing the other recital, if not always intensely beautiful singing *qua* sound, very seldom less than secure and satisfying singing as vocalisation. The voice is on the breath, the light and shade and phrasing proceed from a really well schooled method, and if the interpretations are not yet masterly and definitive (in the way that some superlative Lieder singers make you feel you never could imagine the song sung in any other way or by anyone else) they are instinctively and poetically true. Examples of this fluent and heartfelt singing, with pleasant tone and imaginative sense will be found especially in Rellstab's serenade ("Leise flehen") in *Litanei*, *An die Laute* and *An die Musik*—the latter beautifully suave. *Der Wanderer* has real pathos—at the words "immer fragt der Seufzer 'Wo?'" the singer is entirely identified with the poet. *Erbkönig* is quite well dramatised, but here I think one wants more sense of drama initially in the pianist who overdoes that virtue, discretion; this version hardly makes the scalp tighten. But the reflective songs, including all verses of *Sylvia*, etc., confirm the very considerable success and the fine artistic achievement of this singer. P.H.-W.

NORMAN FOSTER. Mahler. Lieder aus der Letzterzeit (Rückert): "Ich atmet einem linden Duft"; "Liebst Du um Schönheit"; "Blick mir nicht in die Lieder"; "Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen". **Schubert.** "Das Rosenband", D.280 (Klopstock): "Du bist die Ruh", D.776 (Rückert): "Der Musensohn", D.764 (Goethe). **Wolf.** Michelangelo Lieder (trans. Tornow): "Wohl denk'ich oft"; "Alles endet, was entstehet"; "Fühlt meine Seele". **Richard Strauss.** "Siewissen's nicht, Op. 49, No. 5 (Panizza): "Das Rosenband", Op. 36, No. 1 (Klopstock): "Die Nacht", Op. 10, No. 3 (Gilm): "Traum durch die Dämmerrung", Op. 29, No. 1 (Bierbaum): "Zueignung", Op. 10, No. 1 (Gilm). **Norman Foster** (bass-baritone), **Heinrich Schmidt** (piano). Pye CCL30135 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.).

I would far rather run the risk of overpraising this singer than fail to transmit my admiration for his achievement. It is a most impressive one, all things considered—perhaps the more so as the pianist, in whose hands half the effect of a recital of Lieder must always lie, is diffident and never really takes the initiative, quite spoiling some things thereby. Mr. Foster has a darkish, serviceable bass baritone which can growl a little at times and which in fast moving songs (i.e., *Der Musensohn*), which are not his strong suit, there is a touch of that hectoring quality which I myself (but not apparently many German listeners) do not much relish. In fact, if I may make it a purely personal thing, as true criticism inevitably is, I am not wholly enamoured of the timbre of the voice (in

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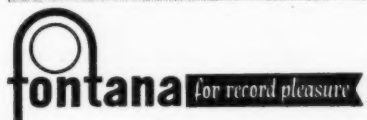
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Aria: Non mi dir, bell'idol mio—
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Ljuba Welitsch (Soprano)
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Aria: Madre, pietosa Vergine
—"La Forza del Destino", Act 2
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Verdi

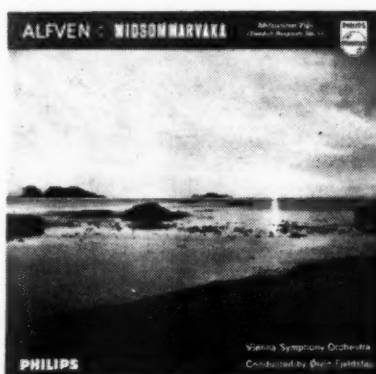
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Aria: Domiro sol nel manto mio regal
—"Don Carlos", Act 4
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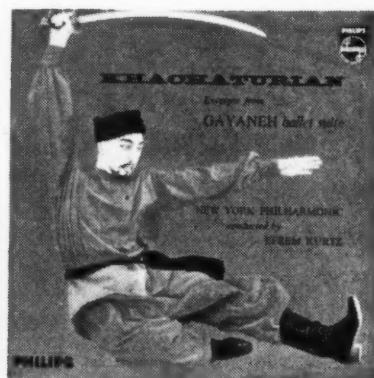
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the way that I am, say, of Souzay's, or to cite older masters, Schlusnus or Janssen). What I do greatly admire, however, is the imaginative insight into the art of the Lieder and still more, perhaps, the control and skill with which Mr. Foster is able almost always to carry into effect the moulding, lighting and shading of the phrases as he wishes them to sound. An instance, to be tiresome, of "not quite bringing it off" occurs at the end of Strauss's *Das Rosenband*; yet how beautifully in all the rest of the song does the tone ride on the breath smooth, serene, not of course "effortless" (silly word—cutting down trees is child's play compared to singing well), but secure for the listener who knows that the anticipated intervals will not catch the singer out of breath or flurried. Mahler's *Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen*, the third of Wolf's Michelangelo songs (with a beautifully brought off and most moving close) and that exposé of the untrained, *Du bist die Ruh*, are all successes. The crescendo on "dies Augenzeit . . . etc." in the latter Schubert song and the spanning of the long phrases are splendidly done. (See also the Schubert recital where the test of *Litanei* is likewise passed.) I liked *Die Nacht* by Strauss but not *Zueignung* where perhaps, because the accompanist won't "get on" with it, the effect is curiously sluggish. Mr. Foster rather tends to treat all songs reflectively and naturally the results are better in some than in others. *Zueignung* may be vulgar in a way, but it comes from the heart, and though Mr. Foster puts plenty of feeling behind those two "Heiligs", the timing of them is not impulsively right. *Traum durch die Dämmerung* limps at first, too.

But I repeat: by and large, there is not merely promise but solid achievement here and much, if not the ultimate pleasure at all points to be derived. P.H.-W.

HANS HOTTER. Schubert. "An die Musik", D.547 (Schober). "Im Abendroth", D.799 (Lappe). Schwanengesang, D.957: No. 4, "Ständchen" (Rellstab); No. 7, "Abschied" (Rellstab). **Schumann.** "Wer machte dich so krank?", Op. 35, No. 11 (Kerner). "Alte Laute", Op. 35, No. 12 (Kerner). "Erstes Grün", Op. 35, No. 4 (Kerner). **Loewe.** "Odin's Meeresritt", Op. 118 (Schreiber). "Die Wandelnde Glocke", Op. 20, No. 3 (Goethe). "Hinkende Jamben", Op. 62, No. 5 (Rückert). **Wolf.** "Verborgeneheit" (Mörke). "Der Musikant" (Eichendorff). "Fussreise" (Mörke). **Hans Hotter** (baritone), **Gerald Moore** (piano). Columbia 33CX1626 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8½d. P.T.).

That Hans Hotter is a noble artist who can make you share deeply his interpretative gift is not in question. Again and again in these famous songs we are brought into contact with a beautifully poetic imagination (for instance *Alte Laute*). But in a song like the famous Serenade of Schubert where there is an absolute melodic standard to be attained, it has to be confessed that the singer's line is not very

finely drawn; apt to sharpen, apt to blur in the middle and to go dead at the ends of phrases. This also militates against absolute surrender to the deeply felt *Verborgeneheit*, a sense of smugness and insecurity afflicting us in the middle section. Again *Der Musikant*, though marvellously imagined fails (for me) for a similar reason, the vocal line in itself is not delicately and securely held. In Gerald Moore's accompaniment to this song on the other hand I find an absolute mastery of means: the pianistic phrasing is as clear and firm as a pencil stroke by a great draughtsman. This slight failure of vocal focus in Hans Hotter as a Lieder singer is something which obviously some listeners will mind less than others or will ignore for the sake of the poetic dignity and grandeur of conception (not least the beautiful feeling for the German words). But I think such defects need to be mentioned because the standards set by the Gerhards and the Gerard Husch's and others of that great school of Lieder singing may easily be lowered. These are lovely songs, the singer is an artist and so is the accompanist; yet I cannot class the record as an example of really first-rate Lieder singing. P.H.-W.

***RITA STREICH. Voices of Spring** (Johann Strauss). **The Nightingale and the Rose** (Saint-Saëns). **The Little Chimney Sweep** (Verdi). **Jocelyn** (Godard): Berceuse. **Parla Waltz** (Arditi). **Die Fledermaus** (Johann Strauss): "Mein Herr Marquis"; "Spiel ich die Unschuld vom Lande". **Tales from the Vienna Woods** (Johann Strauss). **Boccaccio** (Suppé): "Hab ich nur deine Liebe". **Rusalka** (Dvořák): Song to the Moon. **Dinorah** (Meyerbeer): "Ombra leggiera". **Rita Streich** (soprano). **Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra and Chamber Choir** conducted by **Kurt Gaebele**. D.G.G. Stereophonic SLPM136011 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

A bag of bonbons, no fewer than five in waltz time, which could surely be called "sweetly sung". Those who know Rita Streich's accomplishment and also their own taste will not need much more guidance. If you insist on the very highest technical finish you will find that the attack is not perfect in every case, nor the trill without its bumps, but it is a trill and the effect of the singing even in bravura stretches or the utmost reaches of this charmingly *leggiere* organ is one of effortlessness. It gave me much pleasure.

On the interpretative side, Miss Streich does not bring quite such maturity of roguish elegance to the Arditì song as a singer such as Lucrezia Bori, who would exalt a liting nothingness to the realm of minor art. There is a certain failure to mould the phrasing in the Berceuse from *Jocelyn*—"Angels guard thee" to some of us). Also the Moon Song from *Rusalka* needs a firmer line. The *Dinorah* mad scene where the heroine tries out the echo and waltzes with her shadow is done with much feeling, but here again a slightly

firmer line would help. Verdi's song, *Lo Spezzacamino* or *The Little Chimney Sweep*, is Rossinian and delightful. The soft veiled vocalise of the Saint-Saëns *Nightingale* is also very beautiful. But Strauss's Adèle from *Die Fledermaus* has been known to wear a more convincing smile.

The recording is stereophonic and remarkable for "presence" and depth. Of course we know from Glyndebourne that Miss Streich's voice is not large and here she enjoys every acoustic advantage of presentation, but that does not invalidate her achievement as a gramophone artist. I imagine many people will find this record a rewarding and treasurable treat.

P.H.-W.

***ELISABETH SCHWARZKOPF RECITAL. Songs you love.** Drink to me only (Trad. arr. Quilter). Plaisir d'amour (Martini). Auf Flügeln des Gesanges, Op. 34, No. 2 (Mendelssohn). Songs my Mother taught me, Op. 55, No. 4 (Dvořák). Si mes vers avaient des ailes (Hahn). Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt, Op. 6, No. 6 (Tchaikovsky). Murrelndes Lüftchen Op. 21, No. 4 (Jensen). Ich liebe dich, Op. 5, No. 3 (Grieg). Farmyard Song, Op. 61, No. 3 (Grieg). Schwarze Rosen, Op. 36, No. 1 (Sibelius). Wiegenlied, Op. 41, No. 1 (Strauss). In dem Schatten (Wolf). Elfenlied (Wolf). O du liebs angeli (Swiss Folk Song, arr. Gund). Gätzli (Swiss Folk Song, arr. Gund). **Elisabeth Schwarzkopf** (soprano), **Gerald Moore** (piano). Columbia Stereophonic SAX2265 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8½d. P.T.). Mono: (2/57) 33CX1404.

Many readers will know this record well by now; it was the first in Elisabeth Schwarzkopf's series of "Songs You Love". Much as I object to being told by someone else (even by Mme Schwarzkopf) what I like, I accept—as you probably do—the rightness of her choice, questioning only the aptness in our age of Quilter's plush-and-antimacassar harmonisation of *Drink to me only*, and in my own case the Procrustes fit of Goethe's heart-breaking poem to Tchaikovsky's equally poignant but rather disparate tune. Mme Schwarzkopf has a wonderful way with words in all these songs, except perhaps *Plaisir d'amour*, in which she doesn't quite convince; her English is so nearly flawless that one could wish she would go all the way and perfect a couple of vowel-sounds which still stick out.

In its stereo recension the record is shorn of one song, Sibelius's *Säff, säff, susa*, for which reason I at any rate would prefer to have the monophonic disc. The stereo is blameless, only noticeably an improvement in *On Wings of Song*, where the realism suddenly hits you in the face, and in *Si mes vers avaient des ailes*, where it catches a turn of the head, in the second line of each verse, by which the singer spins her tone up into the ceiling. I used to have a record of Delius's *Twilight Fancies* in which Dora Labette produced the same effect; but I wasn't struck in the same way by the mono version of Hahn's song. W.S.M.

VOICES OF ISRAEL. Israeli Songs.

Adama: Din-Dan. **Lewandowski.**
Ma Tovv. **Neumann.** Hodu Al Erez.
Psalms 24. S'u Scheorim. **Rosenblatt.** Mekimi M'ofor Dol: Uvnucho Yomar. **Rumschinski.** Sch'ma Kolenu. **Secunda.** Chazanim Oif Proba: Dos Yiddische Lied. **Traditional.** Kol Nidre. **Ernst Kozub** (tenor), **Elie Taube** (tenor), **Aladar Fuchs** (baritone), **Renée Fleury** (piano), **Maria-Louise Girod** (organ), **Choir "Oratorio de Paris"** conducted by **Max Neumann.** D.G.G. DGM19140 (30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

An indication of the major steps in the development of Jewish music is provided by the items selected for this record.

The age-old traditions are represented by *Kol Nidrei*, the opening of which, by its similarity with the Gregorian Chants, reminds one that the origin of both styles of religious music stem from the temple services. Following their dispersion, the Jewish people absorbed into the Song of the Synagogue the music of their neighbours. They adapted it to the format of the Temple modes, thus preserving the characteristic sound of Jewish Music.

Of the synagogue composers represented

on this record, Lewandowski modelled his compositions on the anthem, Rosenblatt proceeded a further stage by simply interpolating secular tunes, and Neumann, a contemporary, has been influenced to an even greater degree by the musical world surrounding him. Whereas this in itself is no criticism, the composer of religious music must remember that his object is to aid the congregation in worship and must therefore avoid the use of melodies which are liable to distract by virtue of recognition or association. That such occurrences are all too frequent is shown by Secunda's satirical folksong *Chazanim Oif Proba*, which, with *Dos Yiddische Lied*, reflects another aspect of Jewish music. A further facet is illustrated by the two Israeli songs in which a return towards the temple modes can be readily recognised.

Other than a small amount of pre-echo, the recording is perfectly adequate but not outstanding, comments which can also be applied to the performances, but in the Rosenblatt compositions one could not help missing the quality of his own voice.

(This record is now available as a stereophonic disc—D.G.G. SLP136016.)

OPERATIC

CHERUBINI. Medea.

Medea **Maria Callas** (sop.)
Jason **Mirto Picchi** (ten.)
Glauce **Renata Scotto** (sop.)
Creon **Giuseppe Modesti** (bass)
Neris **Miriam Pirazzini** (mezzo-sop.)
First Maid-servant **Lidia Morimietri** (sop.)
Second Maid-servant **Elvira Galassi** (sop.)
The Captain of the Guard **Alfredo Giacomotti** (bar.)

With Orchestra and Chorus of **La Scala, Milan** (Chorus Master: Norberto Mola), Enzo Muccetti (bassoon), conducted by **Tullio Serafin.** Columbia 33CX1618-20 (three 12 in., 90s. plus 35s. 14d. P.T.).

While awaiting the discs of *Medea* for review I spent an interesting time in looking up references to the opera and to Cherubini. He was, as is well known, held in the utmost reverence in Europe. Beethoven considered him the greatest dramatic composer of his time, Haydn called him the greatest living composer, but I did not know that Brahms thought that in *Medea* Cherubini had reached the highest point in dramatic music or that Puccini had declared the opera to be "a real masterpiece". Elsewhere one discovers varying opinions, among them that the composer's operas are now museum pieces. He is not mentioned at all in the revised edition of Kobbé! Now one of the very few things that really enthralled me at school was the study of Greek and of Euripides in particular: and remembering how thrilled I was with his *Medea* I wondered how Cherubini's music would mate with the libretto founded on the play.

The blazing intensity of the Overture knocked me off my patronising perch. Here was a foretaste of the feverish activity of the woman who became a living curse to

humanity, a torment to herself and others, ceaselessly and remorselessly plotting and leaving only wreckage behind her. Tullio Serafin has a firm grasp of the grand classic style and proportions of the opera and I was, for most of the time, held spellbound by it. There are conventionalities, of course—as, for example, at the end of some of the arias—but there is a wealth of invention in the vocal and instrumental writing and a steady drive forward to the ultimate and appalling tragedy.

The Introductions to Acts 2 and 3 are very fine, the first full of suspense, the second a vivid picture of a sultry night, with a great storm breaking out. One learns with surprise from Harold Lawrence's excellent essay, which precedes the Italian-English libretto, that Cherubini uses no trumpets, no extra percussion and that the single trombone is used only to reinforce the off-stage wind band. With these restricted forces he certainly does evoke "sounds of great majesty and power" as well as of great beauty.

Glauce's aria in Act 1, very well sung by Renata Scotto, has a flute obbligato which is delightfully intertwined with the voice, but is recorded too faintly for a perfect balance—especially at the short cadenza. On the other hand there is an admirable balance between voice and obbligato bassoon in the poignant aria allotted to Neris, Medea's handmaid, in Act 2, perhaps the most beautiful thing in the score and admirably sung by Miriam Pirazzini.

Creon, Glauce's father, is a weak old man whose permission to Medea to stay one more day in the palace brings such terrible results: the lack of resonance in Giuseppe Modesti's voice is in character with

the part. Mirto Picchi does his best to characterise the cynical and contemptible Jason. Lionel Mapleson, in his Memoirs, tells of a tenor who sang this part over a space of two years and then plaintively asked if he was supposed to be Medea's father, brother, lover, or what? Signor Picchi is not that sort of tenor, far from it, and it is not his fault that neither libretto nor music bring out the baseness in Jason's character.

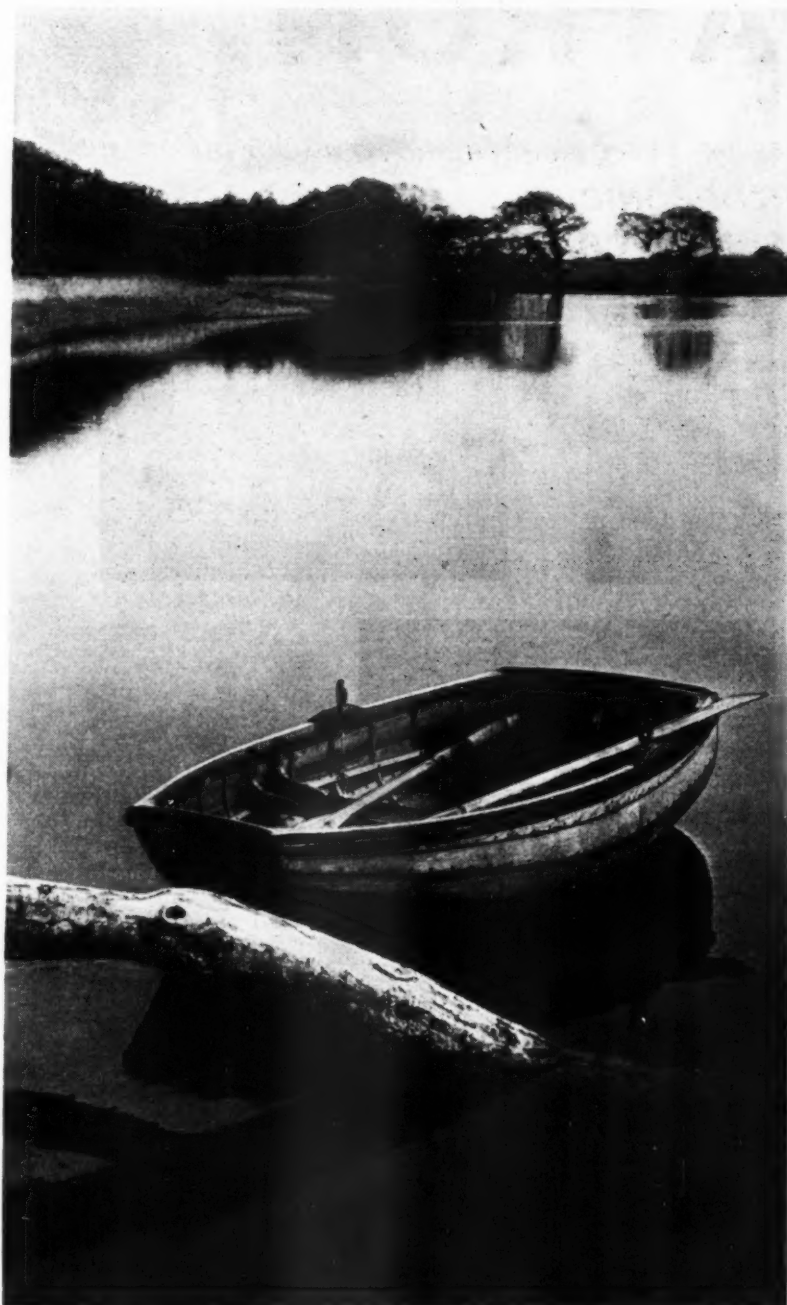
The maidservants sing their first act duet charmingly and the chorus, sometimes too distantly recorded and poor in enunciation, are at their best in the wedding scene of the last act, which begins with a most original strain. My score of the opera bears a motto from the *Médée* of Corneille, "Moi, dis-je, et c'est assez": this is echoed in the libretto in the word "Io son Medea". Callas is indeed Medea, and that is enough: it could not be more. From the moment she discloses herself to her faithless husband, his bride to be and her father, to her tremendous cry at the end of the opera, "I go now to the Styx, the sacred river, there will my shade 'ait you'", this great singer runs through the gamut of human emotions; love and tenderness, hate and scorn, rage and anguish, cruelty and hypocrisy; a princess and a magician who, in spite of her revolting crimes, gains our unwilling sympathy. Only a great character could hate and murder on this scale. And so in Medea's superb arias (in which the orchestral parts are of great originality), in her recitatives, in her duet with Jason (in which the 'cellos play so remarkably a part in creating a sinister atmosphere), at all points, Callas gives the finest performance I have ever heard from her. At one or two moments, as in the first act aria "Dei tuoi figli la madre" (You see the mother of your children), she cannot make us forget the cruelly trying nature of the vocal part, but her voice is in splendid order, her attack magnificent: and she gives us some spine-chilling moments when she glories in the horrible death, by poison which burns the flesh off the body, that she has brought to Glauce and Creon, or when she cries to the Black Furies to come to her aid as she determines to kill her children.

It cannot, unfortunately, be said that the recording is wholly worthy of so fine a performance. It sounds dry in purely orchestral passages and there are faults of balance, but even so one forgets all this very quickly and there are in the less strenuous moments many well sounding passages. The big concerted passages are the least successful.

The recording was made for Ricordi by Mercury—under which label it was issued in America—and whilst we understand that it exists in stereo form no release date for this country has been so far announced. It should be said that the opera is heavily cut, but as there is a good deal of repetition this was probably inevitable—though I resent Medea's arias being tampered with.

Finally, those who want to enjoy the opera to the utmost, should buy and digest a copy of Gilbert Murray's translation of Euripides' play.

A.R.



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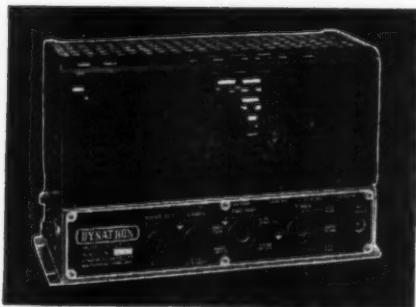
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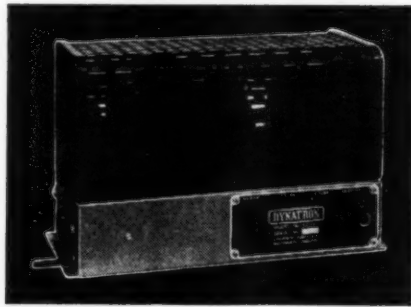
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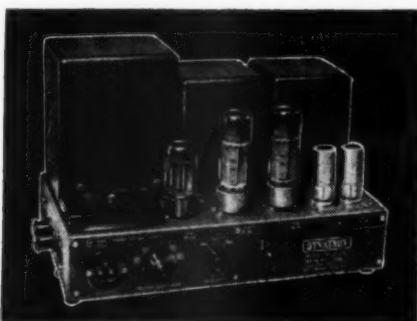
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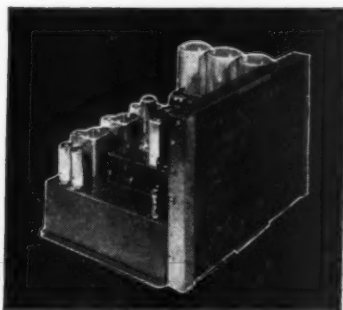
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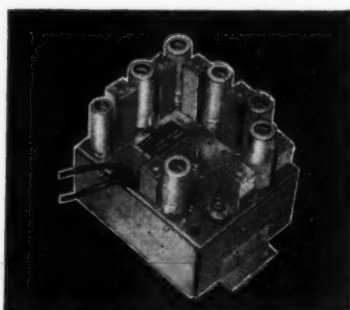
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★**LEHAR. The Merry Widow**—excerpts.

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Camille de Rosillon
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When I reviewed the monophonic version of this recording last October its only rival was the complete Columbia-Schwarzopf set of 1953. Since then Decca have put out their Vienna recording under Robert Stolz in both mono and stereo forms. These were reviewed together by A.P. last December. Comparisons now become very involved. Although the Columbia set is getting on for six years old and is mono only (so far!) it is still the best for those who want the complete operetta sung in the original German and with the spoken words also in German.

But many people do not want it sung, and more particularly spoken in German and will gladly dispense with all spoken words and a little of the music to get it on one disc, and a disc in the cheaper label at that.

I do not want to repeat and I have nothing to retract from what I said about the mono version. Perhaps I might add that William McAlpine and Denis Dowling as the two contenders for the widow's hand are even better than I suggested. In stereo one is able to appreciate them the more keenly. The stereo version indeed is substantially better in every respect. Even the solo voices gain poise and the orchestra and chorus are as realistically recorded as in the Decca set, which is praise indeed, although in a selection this fact cannot be quite as obvious as in a complete performance, as for instance, in the opening crowd scene. In the Decca set, given in full, one can almost see the curtain rise after the end of the overture, to reveal the party in noisy progress.

In a nutshell, then, there is no "best", but the stereo Sadler's Wells record is undoubtedly the best value for money for the vast majority of people. W. A. CHISLETT

LORTZING. Der Waffenschmied: "Auch ich war ein Jüngling". **Zar und Zimmermann** "O Sancta Justitia". **Erich Kunz** (baritone), **Philharmonia Orchestra** conducted by **Otto Ackermann**. Columbia SEL1608 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3½d. P.T.).

The dearly loved buffo bass needs no encomiums from me. He's in excellent form here, resonant, forwardly projected tone, words absolutely clear and full of humorous inflexion, and vividly recorded. "Auch ich war ein Jüngling" is a characteristic example of the sentimental romance that somebody usually sings in Lortzing's operas, usually in the third act; German audiences weep copiously and demand several encore verses

(Lortzing, one up on Gilbert, left extra words for this special purpose), but it takes a Kunz to hold my interest in the Waffenschmied's happy dreams of home. Van Bett is the pompous burgomaster who announces his omniscience and sagacity in "O sancta Justitia". This is the number which contains the couplet that has become almost a cliché for any German: "O, ich bin klug und weise, und mich betrügt man nicht". And there is a slow middle section with a comic duet for voice and bassoon; Kunz, rather to my surprise, is unsteady of intonation here. He leaves out the usual comic business and sings the low F at the end.

If you remember Kunz's earlier Lortzing record, you will know what to expect: no disappointments. W.S.M.

MOZART. (a) Il Seraglio: "Welcher Kummer . . . Traurigkeit". (b) **Concert Aria**, "A questo seno", K.374. **Maria Stader** (soprano) with (a) **Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Ferenc Fricsay**, (b) **Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Leopold Ludwig**. D.G.G. EPL30223 (7 in., 12s. plus 4s. 8½d. P.T.).

Maria Stader positively begins the concert aria as "A questo seno"—a fault ineradicable apparently in Germans singing Italian! This piece was written for the male soprano Ceccarelli whom Mozart detested; it is at times not unlike a very fast version of "Che farò" from Gluck's *Orfeo*. It is given a fluent and accomplished performance here, with decent recording, but "means" little. It is an addition to the catalogues—for the right buyer. The reverse is what is more likely to sell the little disc; the singer puts a sense of style and feeling behind Costanze's lovely, sorrowful aria. The attacks, all important, are fairly clean and not too effortful; this appears to be the same performance as appeared coupled with "Martern aller Arten" and the *Exultate Jubilate* on DG17027 which, in turn, came from the complete D.G.G. *Il Seraglio*. P.H.-W.

MOZART. Così fan tutte: "Per pietà, bel idol mio." **Aria:** "Ah, se in ciel." K.538. **Teresa Stich-Randall** (soprano), **Paris Conservatoire Orchestra** conducted by **André Cluytens**. H.M.V. 7ER5125 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3½d. P.T.).

Both on records and in live performances Teresa Stich-Randall has developed her art over the last four years or so into one that has to be judged by the highest standards. Her singing of the soprano solo part in Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* at Leeds last October was altogether exceptional, likewise her account of Sophie in the Columbia *Rosenkavalier*.

Perhaps all this led me to hope too much from this disc. *Ah, se in ciel* is only routine work, according to Einstein (he adds that we should be glad of this, since it means that Mozart was no longer infatuated with the "fatal lady", his sister-in-law Aloysia,

for whom he wrote it). But it is still an allegro aria of remarkable vivacity and effectiveness. I had hoped that Miss Stich-Randall would give it the dazzling accuracy it deserves. But her florid runs, though agile enough, are not quite accurate, and her tone sometimes turns rough; her attack is excellent, but there is not enough of it.

She puts too many aspirates into the divisions of "Per pietà", Fiordiligi's second act aria from *Così fan tutte* and just misses a victory at the end of the cabaletta. The horn solo here is extremely saxy, as may be expected. But how did that unclean string playing in the cabaletta get passed?

There are some beautiful phrases from Miss Stich-Randall, on both sides, and some exquisite cultured-pearl tone. She is evidently an excellent musician. But she isn't accurate in music that demands 100 per cent accuracy. W.S.M.

★**MOZART. Le Nozze di Figaro**—complete.

Count Almaviva	Alfred Poell (bar.)
Figaro	Cesare Siepi (bass)
Doctor Bartolo	Fernando Corena (bass)
Don Curzio	Hugo Meyer-Welfing (ten.)
Don Basilio	Murray Dickie (ten.)
Antonio	Harold Proghof (bass)
Countess Almaviva	Lisa della Casa (sop.)
Susanna	Hilde Gueden (sop.)
Cherubino	Suzanne Danco (sop.)
Marcellina	Hilde Rossi-Majdan (sop.)

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and Vienna State Opera Chorus conducted by **Erich Kleiber**. Decca Stereophonic SXL2087-90 (four 12 in., 115s. plus 44s. 10d. P.T.). Mono: LXT5088-91 (11/55).

The complete *Figaro* situation seems to me to leave this Decca set, with Kleiber's incomparably beautiful handling of the best opera ever written (in so many ways), more or less top of the list. I am sorry to hedge; but of course innumerable minor likes and dislikes have to be weighed. The main basis for choice, however, seems to me not whether you like Miss X or Miss Y rather than this or that other madam, but whether the tempi invariably allow Mozart's genius the proper breath of life. The (Columbia) Karajan set is for me disqualified on that score; but the Glyndebourne set (Jurinac, Sciutti and Bruscantini under Gui) also dances along without tumbling over and it is possible to obtain that in the form of an H.M.V. stereophonic tape, so we may expect its eventual appearance on stereo discs. However, as long as what we have to consider is "which is the best" complete *Figaro*, there can be only one answer: this. As little as two years have made a great difference to stereo techniques and it is no good expecting in this 1955 recording startling all-round-the-room effects. But it is demonstrably deeper and more vivid than the mono version.

May I make the point that what would always decide me in the case of a set I wanted to possess would be performance rather than recording. I would rather hear Kleiber conduct Mozart on 78s than never-mind-who having a bash at it in the highest of hi-fi. But happily we get here lovely playing and rich and mellow recording. For various niggling likes and dislikes about the style of the singing and so on I must refer you back to my notice of 1955. P.H.-W.

NESSLER. *Der Trompeter von Säklingen*—excerpts.

Werner Kirchhofer Hermann Frey (bar.)
Maria Heidebrand (sop.)
Conradin Karl Kohn (bass)

Berlin State Opera Chorus and Orchestra conducted by **Wilhelm Schüchter** (Chorus Master: Hermann Lüddecke). Columbia SEG7840 (7 in., 8s. plus 3s. 1½d. P.T.).

Alt Heidelberg du feine; Möchte in die Ferne;
Ich knie vor Euch als getruer Vasall (Trumpet Serenade); Behüt dich Gott! Es war zu schön gewesen.

Victor Nessler's *The Trumpeter of Säklingen* appeared in Leipzig in 1884, and soon became a popular piece on German stages. Disagreeable things of it are spoken by Fuller-Maitland in *Grove*: "its tawdry modulations and its easily memorable but dreadfully sentimental tunes . . . its easy superficiality commended it far beyond its deserts to the less musical section of the German public". It is still revived from time to time in Germany, but the four items from it, recorded on this little 45, do not suggest that J.A.F.-M. was being at all unfair. The libretto is based on Scheffel's verse-tale recounting a popular legend but the Columbia sleeve, though it does print the words of the first and last items (in German only), gives us no clue to the situations. The chorus "Alt Heidelberg" (which starts like "The Vicar of Bray") is very square. The duet for the two men, "Möchte in die Ferne Schweben", flows along easily; and the Trumpet Serenade (male-voice chorus with solo trumpet interludes) is rather pleasant. Young Werner's Farewell ("Behüt' dich Gott") is stably sentimental, and well sung by Hermann Frey. A.P.

*ROSSINI. *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*.

Il Conte d'Almaviva Luigi Alva (ten.)
Bartolo Fritz Ollendorf (bass)
Rosina Maria Meneghini Callas (sop.)
Figaro Tito Gobbi (bar.)
Basilio Nicola Zaccaria (bass)
Fiorello Mario Carlin (ten.)
Berta Gabriella Carturan (sop.)

Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus (Chorus Master: Roberto Benaglio) conducted by **Alceo Galliera**. Columbia Stereophonic SAX2266-8 (three 12 in., 90s. plus 35s. 1½d. P.T.). Mono: (2/58) 33CX1507-9.

This is the stereophonic version of the La Scala mono issue, reviewed last February. The recording was good but not superlative: there was never any lack of presence and though the present version is slightly deeper and richer, (as you can test by playing the thunderstorm on side 6—one inch in on both sets), and, I feel sure, worth doing, the testing questions of the exact value of the performance do not involve those of "sound": though of course the quality of the singers' tone will be ever present.

I feel exactly about it as I did before. I find that the vocal acting in the recitatives and the immense care lavished on their detail and that of the orchestral playing while delighting us in such a slap-dash world as ours, have somehow combined to take the sparkle out of many passages which are, if not sparkling, unremarkable as music. As to the lyrical and decorative parts, there will be reservations among people who care deeply about such things.

Gobbi, a superlative artist and much too cunning to let us peer deeply into any weaknesses, is nevertheless, demonstrably, not now at his best in any kind of florid singing. Callas, is the most calculating of Rosinas, often brilliant, clever and witty, but without much gaiety, real spontaneous gaiety. She also does the things she often does; following passages of radiant violin-like phrasing with curdled, hollow or wavering and ill-supported singing. The tenor often sounds amusing and in the flesh, as we know, is a charming youthful actor, but his florid singing, it seems to me, only just gets by and is seldom intrinsically beautiful. Zaccaria comes out of it well. As far as Rossinian jokes can be caught by ear alone, his Basilio is enjoyable. So in a way is the whole set—superior to the depressing alternatives. But if you have it already in the monophonic version, I can assure you that the stereo version is not radically different. P.H.-W.

RICHARD STRAUSS. *Capriccio*.

The Countess Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (sop.)
The Count Eberhard Wächter (bar.)
Flamand, as musician Nicolai Gedda (ten.)
Olivier, a poet Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (bar.)
La Roche the Theatre Director Hans Hotter (bar.)
The Actress Clairon

Monsieur Taupe Christa Ludwig (mezzo-sop.)
An Italian Soprano Rudolf Christ (ten.)
An Italian Tenor Anna Moffo (sop.)
The Major Domo Dermot Troy (ten.)
A Servant Karl Schmitt-Walter (bar.)
Eight Servants: Wolfgang Sawallisch (bass), Ian Humphries (ten.), John Hauxwell (bar.), Geoffrey Walls (bass.), Lesley Fyson (ten.), Edward Darling (ten.), David Winnard (bass.)

Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by **Wolfgang Sawallisch**. Columbia 33CX1600-2 (three 12 in., 90s. plus 35s. 1½d. P.T.).

Capriccio is an ideal opera to listen to in the peace of one's home. In the theatre, if it is given in the original language, a non-German speaking audience may well enjoy the "set pieces" and obtain from a synopsis a general idea of the action; but the many conversational exchanges, the ebb and flow of the argument—which turns round the primacy of words or music—will inevitably be lost on such an audience. Now, provided with Walter Legge's brilliant translation of the libretto into idiomatic and often racy English—which, thank goodness, is printed opposite and not under the German text—we can follow every word of this absolutely enchanting work.

The libretto is preceded by an interesting essay by Ernest Roth, with a few music quotations, from which I learnt that "the idea of a sonnet written by a poet and set to music by a composer for a countess with whom both are in love, as the centre piece that sets off the discussion, was Strauss's contribution", and so was the whimsical ending, as masterly in its way as the end of Act 2 of *Die Meistersinger*. The setting near Paris in 1775, the time of Gluck's reform operas, was Clemens Krauss's suggestion. The opera is dedicated to Krauss, "my friend and collaborator".

After the first performance in Munich on October 28th, 1942, Strauss said, with tears in his eyes, "I can do no better". He does not break new ground as Verdi did in his two last operas, but rather gives us the

distillation of his genius in the luminous orchestral writing, the beauty of the vocal phrases—some of them recalling the past either in deliberate quotation or as near relations—the effortless mastery with which the seventy-eight year old composer pours out this stream of lovely, lively, and witty music.

Strauss keeps the curtain down for about twelve minutes of chamber music, the String Sextet by Flamand with which the opera begins. It can seem a long twelve minutes, but not when played with such ravishing tone and sensitivity as the Philharmonia strings give us. The other purely orchestral piece of any length prefaces the closing scene of the opera, and, Mr. Roth tells us, its melody comes from a set of songs Strauss composed in 1918 which were published only in an *édition de luxe*. We hear this expressive melody earlier in the opera (with some of the characters, however, singing through it), but in the closing scene the horns have their special moment of glory with it.

The discussion of "prima la musica" or "prima le parole" does not go deep, and is anyway only of academic interest in opera or song since music will always, as Olivier laments when Flamand sets his sonnet, have its way with a poem and make it something other than it is. As the two young men argue it is La Roche, the theatre director, who has his feet on the ground and yet is, in his way, an idealist. Had he also been an actor I should have said that he greatly resembled Beerbohm Tree.

Clairon, the actress, is—as the tune that heralds her entrance tells us—of the line of Zerbinetta, only rather more cynical. The dewy-eyed Countess thoroughly enjoys the contest for her hand and endeavours to distribute her favours equally, but the last bars of the opera make it clear, even if it had not been clear before, that she inclines to Flamand. She is a fascinating character. Her brother detests opera, but has an eye for personable female singers, and so for Clairon.

Two Italian singers turn up with a delicious parody of Italian opera in a duet and have a part in the splendid Octet, in the first section of which poor La Roche, with his grandiose plans for opera, is unmercifully ragged (this is called the "laughing" ensemble) and in the second part, the "quarrelling" ensemble, Flamand and Olivier lose their tempers. The recording gives excellent balance in this piece. The eight servants have an amusing little scene on their own, and it will be noticed that there is a ninth servant played by Wolfgang Sawallisch. He sings, unaccompanied, the equivalent of the famous words "My lord, the carriage waits" ("Prima il direttore, dopo il cantore!")—a little joke of Mr. Legge's no doubt. Just before the wonderful closing scene a mousey little man wanders in blinking—it is Monsieur Taupe, the prompter, forgotten by everyone except when he rules the stage from his little box. This is an excellent piece of stagecraft.

So it is that Strauss has given life to this delightful assemblage of characters, whom we really get to know. For good measure he includes three dances of the time.



Walter Legge and Wolfgang Sawallisch listening to a play-back of "Capriccio" (Photo: E. Auerbach)

Passpied, Gigue and Gavotte, and a *Fugue* whose theme is suggested by the rhythm of words sung by Olivier on the prevailing topic of words or music. To keep the lines of the discussion clear there is no concerted writing in this fugue. A glance at the cast will be sufficient to guarantee the supreme excellence of the performance. Gedda and Fischer-Dieskau are perfectly contrasted as Flamand and Olivier, and anyone who has thought of the melody of the sonnet as "halting" will need to revise his opinion after hearing Gedda's (and later Schwarzkopf's) exquisite singing of its five bar phrases. Hotter has perhaps the heaviest task in coping with the high lying vocal part in the great Monologue at the end of the Octet. It is a long and unremitting stretch of singing, but he sings splendidly and tires only near the end.

Christa Ludwig is well cast as Clairon and makes a very good foil to Elisabeth Schwarzkopf's radiant portrait of the Countess. To her, as it should be, falls some of the loveliest music in the opera; sometimes just a few phrases, sometimes an *arioso*, to all of which she does full justice, and then, finally, the most beautiful closing scene when she appears on the moonlit terrace deep in thought and then comes into the salon to pour forth her heart. The events of the day, the Count has suggested, will make a fine opera: but how will it end—to whom will she give herself. Can there be an ending that is not trivial? The Countess looks smilingly into the mirror and makes a deep curtsy to her reflection. Then, in the highest spirits and humming the melody of the sonnet, she goes into her supper-room, leaving the major-domo astonished.

Schwarzkopf is not happily recorded at the big climax of this scene, but, in general,

she sings it even better than the previously issued disc of it (Columbia 33CX1226). The small parts could not be better done and there is a fine sense of team-work about the whole affair. Sawallisch is alert to the constant play of light and shade, the changing emotions, in the glorious score, and the Philharmonia Orchestra give him of their very best.

The recording, except for a gusty moment or two on the first side and the bit of distortion mentioned in the Closing Scene, is exceedingly good. I understand that *Capriccio* will not be issued on stereo, so there is no need for anyone to hold back from acquiring at once one of the most delectable operas of our time, an inexhaustible source of delight. A.R.

SMETANA. *The Secret*.

Malina	Karel Kalas (bass)
Kalina	Premysl Koci (bar.)
Rose	Stepanka Stepanova (alto)
Blazenka	Stefa Petrova (sop.)
Vit	Ivo Zidek (ten.)
Bonifac	Vladimir Jedensctik (bar.)
Skrivanek	Oldrich Kovar (ten.)
A Builder	Josef Krikava
The Innkeeper	Milada Cadikovicova
Jirka	Rudolf Vonasek
The Ghost of Friar Barnabas	Josef Rozanek (bar.)

Prague National Theatre Chorus (Chorus Master: Jarmil Burghauser) and **Orchestra** conducted by **Jaroslav Krombholc**. Supraphon LPV157-9 (three 12 in., 90s. plus 35s. 3d. P.T.).

Smetana's opera *The Secret* was composed in 1877-8, at the very time when he lost the last traces of his hearing and when his regular theatre salary was stopped. The librettist, Elishka Krasnohorska (also author of *The Kiss*), recalled that "the master's mood was not so olympic as when he was composing *The Kiss*. The libretto made

him pensive; even the comic figures seemed to him serious ones, the spark of his golden humour would not kindle, and the unhappy genius had to admit that the undercurrent of sadness had its source in him and in the tragedy he was living through".

The Secret is not the most immediately attractive of Smetana's operas after *The Bartered Bride*; yet it is a very interesting, in parts a delightful one; and, as a recent Oxford University production showed, eminently stageable outside Czechoslovakia. (In Czechoslovakia it is in regular repertory.) The story is a faintly silly one. Friar Barnabas sent to young Kalina a message telling him of a secret passage which would lead him to a treasure; it did not reach him. Years and years later the message turns up. Kalina goes down the passage and at the end of it he finds Miss Rose, whom he had wanted to marry when he was young: for the passage leads into the Malina living-room (lucky that Rose was in!). Smetana chose this story from among several he was offered, because he found in it, I imagine, characters he could treat more seriously than perhaps the librettist intended. Kalina's match to Rose was prevented because he was poor: now he has grown bitter; he has run heavily into debt in an effort to impress the townspeople with apparent affluence; he plunges down the secret passage scarcely caring whether the escapade costs him his life. And yet all the while he loves Rose, though he is too proud to admit it. Miss Rose, too, loves him, and will not show it; unnecessarily she has grown into a short-tempered spinster—not irretrievably so, as the happy end shows. The only reasonably easy-going fellow is Malina, Rose's brother; but he loses no opportunity to score over the pretentious Kalina.

Kalina's son and Malina's daughter, Vit and Blazenka, are in love—a Romeo and Juliet, or rather Fenton and Anne Page, young lovers who must meet in secret against parents' wishes. But their music is not quite the fresh contrast it might have been, since the old people's opposition makes them unhappy and fearful for the future. The work is more a "character" opera than a comedy; if there is a slight monotony of tone and pace, it is because—until the end—everything seems to be going wrong for everyone. There are contrasts however: Acts 1 and 3 open with choral numbers—one against the rhythmical clack of threshing, the other while hop branches are being stripped—which are highly attractive. There is a pretty ballad for Skrivaneck, the town songster, and there is the scene—funnier on the stage than on disc—where Kalina's secret is passed from person to person, each of them promising to tell no one else, until the town bellringer, with a great show of secrecy, divulges it from the top of the spire through his speaking-trumpet to his friend Skrivaneck down below.

The performance is well sung, but not surpassingly well. The first Miss Rose, Mme Fibich, "misses the lyrical touch", according to Foerster; and so, rather, does Stepanka Stepanova. Kalas's performance as Malina is full of character. The singing of the young lovers is somewhat lacking in

charm. The recording, which dates from 1953, is quite good. This is an interesting and unusual opera, different from Smetana's other works, and all record libraries, at least, should have it. A Czech/English libretto is supplied with the records. A.P.

WAGNER. Das Rheingold—complete.

Wotan	George London (bass-bar.)
Fricka	Kirsten Flagstad (sop.)
Alberich	Gustav Neidlinger (bass)
Loge	Set Svanholm (ten.)
Donner	Eberhard Waechter (bass)
Froh	Waldemar Kmentt (ten.)
Mime	Paul Kuen (ten.)
Fasolt	Walter Kreppel (bass)
Fafner	Kurt Boehme (bass)
Freia	Claire Watson (sop.)
Erda	Jean Madeira (cont.)
Woglinde	Oda Balsborg (sop.)
Wellgunde	Hetty Plümacher (cont.)
Flosshilde	Ira Malaniuk (sop.)

With Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Georg Solti. Decca Mono LXT5495-7 (three 12 in., 86s. 3d. plus 33s. 7½d. P.T.).

★Decca Stereo SXL2101-3 (three 12 in., 86s. 3d. plus 33s. 7½d. P.T.). Complete in presentation box with illustrated booklet. The records are not available separately.

For the Decca stereo *Walküre* I pulled out superlatives (and the set impresses me more each time I play it), but this new *Rheingold* is an even more stupendous piece of recording. If I write about the recording before the performance, do not think I deem it more important, but there have been fine performances of *Das Rheingold* before, while this is the first time (barring an off-the-air from Bayreuth pirate set) that the first *Ring* opera has been put on disc. In his article on page 441 Mr. John Culshaw describes some of the special effects that were employed: the six harps strung out to form the Rainbow Bridge, the blocks of tin to simulate gold, the orphan children shrieking like Nibelungs. But more important than any of the special effects is the splendour and fidelity of the orchestral sound and the magnificent reproduction of the voices. Stereo, we are told, is an illusion. This recording gives one a very complete illusion of experiencing a performance. The recording is not exaggerated, not over-brilliant or over-defined; the triangle does not jump out at you, as if to show just how hi-fi it can get. The supreme virtue of the finest stereo recording—and this is the finest I have heard—is its naturalness. The engineers seem to have aimed at a spacious theatre acoustic: not exactly an embracing Bayreuth one, but one more like an ideal old-style opera house, of the kind in which Richard Strauss (who believed that "many of the inexhaustible riches of the score are lost at Bayreuth") preferred to hear *The Ring* performed.

And yet it is not exactly a theatre illusion that we have but perhaps something even closer to Wagner's creation. This set can put us ordinary mortals in the position of that happy musician described somewhere by Mr. Ernest Newman, who reads the score and hears a performance without having even the sight of performers, let alone their possible distortion of the music, come between him and the com-

poser. This for two reasons: first, because the performance is an extraordinarily faithful one without shortcomings, and also without personal idiosyncrasies which make us think, say, of Herr X. rather than of Alberich; and second, because—while the important sonic effects of space, the differentiation of the voices, the Rhinemaidens deep down in the valley—are reproduced, there is nothing visual—no absurd dragon, no transformation scenes, nor any fidgeting neighbours—to distract attention from the music-drama. No one would deny that splendid acting and magnificent, appropriate stage-pictures, are an essential part of opera. Yet listening to these records is not just like going to the opera house without looking at the stage. In some mysterious way they seem to catch you up in the work—not in a particular set of performers—more intimately than that. This *Rheingold* recording, and also *La Fanciulla*, show that the Decca team has somehow discovered the secret of preserving an opera alive on disc in a way that offers something new in musical experience. Here we seem to experience the very characters of *The Ring*—not grease-painted actors before cardboard rocks—acting out the drama.

Solti's conducting is superb: extraordinarily faithful, never eccentric, never obtrusive, lyrical without ever becoming slack or sluggish, dramatic without ever being overbearing. It is, if you like, less personal than Knappertsbusch's, or Furtwängler's, or Kempe's; it is extraordinary only in its excellence. The Vienna Philharmonic plays magnificently. The drama is dominated by the Alberich of Gustav Neidlinger. All Alberich's make something of the great Curse; but I have never heard another Alberich (nor Neidlinger himself before) give quite so tremendously subtle and powerful an account of the speech in scene 3 where he describes his ambition for world-domination: instinct with malice, violence, and envy, and a kind of crazed grandeur. It is terrific, and throughout, Neidlinger's performance is superlative.

This is Flagstad's first Fricka. At first, her unmistakable voice almost breaks the illusion I have spoken of, and in the second scene there are perhaps a few notes, round D and E, to which she gives a little too much tone. But if I were to list all the phrases which she sings with unforgettable beauty of tone and justness of expression, it would take all the review. Let me mention just two: "Wotan, Gemahl", when Freia has left them, and Fricka's anger and reproaches have turned to fear, what is to become of them? And "Lieblichste Schwester", the phrase with which she greets the returning Freia. Flagstad might have been studying Fricka all her life, so complete is her realization of the music. George London's Wotan, on the other hand, is obviously going to develop. Already it is exceedingly impressive, nobly voiced and authoritatively delivered. But there are some key-phrases—"Den Ring muss ich haben", and "der Mächtigen mächtigsten Herrn!" (Solti's handling of the orchestra here is especially impressive), and the first naming of Valhalla—which

could tell more and "Wolltest du Frau in der Feste mich fangen" could have been delivered with a touch more humour. There are few enough jokes in *The Ring*.

Svanholm's Loge has all the intelligence and understanding that Covent Garden audiences know so well. Böhme's Fasner, steadier than it was at Covent Garden, is admirably characterized. Walter Kreppel's firmly placed voice is new to me (his name turns up in reports from Düsseldorf and Frankfurt), and he is imaginatively cast, for he suggests an impetuous, romantic young Giant, much more interested in Freia than in the gold. The Rhinemaidens are good, the Wellgunde of Hetty Plümacher especially so. One almost senses Alberich turning round as her seductive cry of "Heia, du Holder" breaks in from the left (even at Covent Garden we have no stereo effect here; the Rhinemaidens are firmly anchored inside the rock, while ballet girls trip the stage). Kuen's Mime, Claire Watson's Freia and Jean Madeira's Erda are less remarkable, though not inadequate. The Donner and Froh are excellent.

Some details: the transformation of the "Ring" to the "Valhalla" motif, in its opalescent changes of scoring while the mists clear to reveal Scene 2, is beautifully conducted and played; so are all the wind solos in the magical passage when the gods suddenly feel that they are growing old; a trill on the bass clarinet before Fasolt's outburst, "Lichtsohn du", almost shows the giant curling his lip in a menacing snarl—a detail I had not noticed before. Likewise, the yelping horns as the invisible Alberich pursues the Nibelungs into the distance. Possibly a slight miscalculation before Woglinde's opening words: the pedal horns are almost inaudible, which makes too sudden a break with the watery swell of the Prelude; the orchestra seems for a moment to have been thrown back. The timpani are rather faint when the gold lights up, and distinctly too faint under Fricka's "Wotan, Gemahl" (not the fault of my gramophone, since they are clearly audible elsewhere). The anvils make a tremendous impression; for an alarming moment one's room seems full of hammering anvils, and then we pass through them again. The giants' quarrel seems rather back-stage. The Rhinemaidens' final appeals to Wotan, however achieved, are brilliantly successful; so is the voice of the Tarnhelm Alberich. The gold, I think, a little less so. The clink seems rather high in pitch (but I don't really know what blocks of gold sound like—surely more massive in tone than this). Donner seems to hit one of them (overlooked by the giants?) with a high clink, when wielding his hammer: surely a deep-toned bang would have been more appropriate? Alberich's laughter at the end of the first scene (marked "from the lowest depth") seems too forward, though the effect is striking. Why should the Nibelungs have high, shrill voices (Alberich and Mime don't)? The last side-break is unfortunate: a minute before the end of the Erda scene (could it not have been done at "Hört, ihr Riesen!"). The mono discs form a rich, spacious and amazingly fine recording in their own right,

The first complete recording of



Das
RHEINGOLD

LONDON · FLAGSTAD · SVANHOLM · NEIDLINGER
VIENNA PHILHARMONIC · SOLTI

**A performance of tremendous vitality
transcending everything yet achieved on record**

The mono version is breathtaking

The stereo version is unbelievable

WAGNER

DAS

Rheingold

Complete recording sung in German

CAST

Wotan **GEORGE LONDON**

Fricka **KIRSTEN FLAGSTAD**

Alberich **GUSTAV NEIDLINGER**

Loge **SET SVANHOLM**

Donner **Eberhard Wächter**

Froh **Waldemar Kmentt**

Mime **Paul Kuen**

Fasolt **Walter Kreppel**

Fafner **Kurt Boehme**

Frela **Claire Watson**

Erda **Jean Madeira**

Woglinde **Oda Balsborg**

Wellgunde **Hetty Plumacher**

Flosshilde **Ira Malaniuk**

THE VIENNA PHILHARMONIC
ORCHESTRA

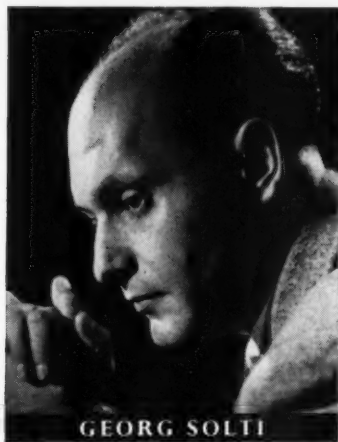
conducted by

GEORG Solti





KIRSTEN FLAGSTAD



GEORG SOLTI



GUSTAV NEIDLINGER



SET SVANHOLM



A general view of the recording in progress.

When Act III and part of Act II of *DIE WALKÜRE* were issued last year, a new era of operatic recording was opened. The stereo version, recently released, of these excerpts brought forth such comments as '... a great recording of the century' and '... technically the most magnificent operatic recording I have heard'.

Now, the techniques applied to this recording have been used for the first complete recording of *DAS RHEINGOLD*—issued this month in both stereo and mono.

The basis of these techniques is to combine the advantages of a studio recording as much as possible with those of a public performance. Stereo brings out to the full the benefits of this approach, but even in a mono recording the dramatic intensity is greatly enhanced.

There were twenty-five piano rehearsals for *DAS RHEINGOLD*. They covered a period of three weeks and involved study of the stage action as well as of the conductor's musical requirements.

Wagner's original instructions were meticulously followed and where they were vague with regard to stage direction prints of original Bayreuth productions were studied. As far as the special musical and sound effects were concerned, it soon became obvious that Wagner knew exactly what he wanted. With one effect only was compromise necessary: Viennese banks were found to be reluctant to lend gold blocks for the piling of the hoard in scene four, and so solid tin was substituted ... even this was under guard!



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DAS RHEINGOLD calls for the full technical resources of the modern stage (although it rarely enjoys them). It was therefore perfectly legitimate to make the fullest use of modern techniques for this performance of the work in an aural medium only. Thus, in scene three, when Alberich dons the Tarnhelm, disappears and then thrashes Mime, for thirty-two bars it is impossible to escape from his all-enveloping, terrifying presence. Thus, in *full frequency stereophonic sound*, DAS RHEINGOLD really lives on record. We believe that this achievement surpasses even that of DIE WALKÜRE, and we also sincerely believe that this is a performance and recording which in every respect would delight the great work's creator.



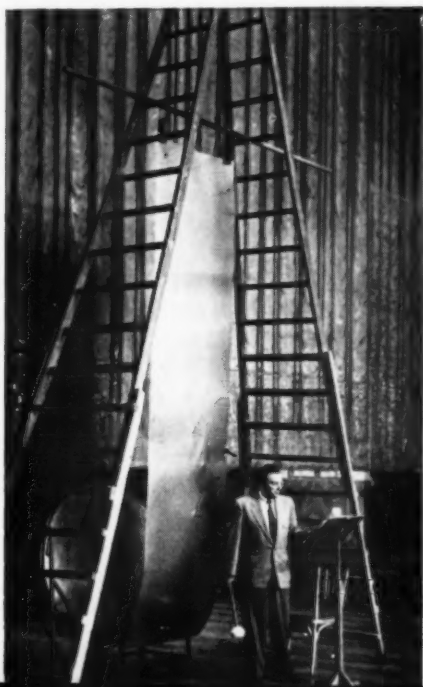
The Donner hammer in scene IV was an extra-large type wielded by an extra-large percussionist.



For the Niebelheim scene eighteen anvils of the kind specified by Wagner were obtained. Fifteen are shown here—the other three were used 'offstage'.

For once the Rainbow Bridge passage was played as written—with six harps in the orchestra and one backstage with the Rhinemaidens.

The thunder effects were produced by an enormous metal sheet obtained in Linz.



Three 12" LP records in a presentation box with an illustrated book on the artists and the recording and including a synopsis of the opera.

Decca libretto with line-by-line literal English translation and thematic index: price 8/6d.



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but a few minutes' hearing of the other set should be enough to convert anyone to stereo.

The small criticisms made above are not listed in any spirit of carping; it would take too long to mention the thousands of things that are brilliantly right with this wonderful set. I should have said before that the balance between voices and orchestra, within the orchestra, and between voices and voices, is ideally conceived. There seems to be a slight temptation (as in almost all opera recordings, whenever Canio drops a knife, or Butterfly a teacup) to make the non-musical effects over-prominent (I am thinking here of the blows Alberich gives Mime—the miners' table-bumping in *Fanciulla* is another example). Guard against this, Decca; and go on giving us opera recordings, like this one, which surpass anything done before. A.P.

WAGNER. Der Fliegende Holländer: "Die Frist ist um". **Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg:** "Was duftet doch der Flieder"; "Wahn! Wahn! Überall Wahn!". **Die Walküre:** "Leb' wohl, du kühnes, herrliches Kind!". **George London** (bass baritone), **Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Hans Knappertsbusch**. Decca LXT5478 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.).

★Decca Stereophonic SXL2068 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.).

There is only one criticism that I can think of which might be levelled against George London in this disc—that his voice, manly, resonant and splendidly steady as it is, sounds a trifle youthful for characters like Wotan and Hans Sachs. But in every other way his singing compels admiration: a fine firm line, unflinching exactness of intonation and rhythm (how often can that be said of most Wagnerian singers?), exemplary enunciation, intelligent and expressive treatment of words and a true sense of character—no wonder he is highly regarded by Bayreuth. He is supported here by most beautiful orchestral playing—Knappertsbusch's masterly hand is everywhere apparent—which sets off Wagner's instrumentation in a rich glow. (Only one tiny lapse from grace is noticeable—an untidy pizzicato chord in *Wahn, Wahn* after "Wer gibt den Namen an?") These are not merely good performances: they have that intense, imaginative re-creation of the music which lifts them out of that category. Two orchestral examples will suffice—the tremendous effect of the broadening-out for the brass's "spell music" after Wotan's last words, and the lovely sheen on the sound at the Spring motive behind "Ein Kobold" in *Wahn, Wahn*.

If ever a demonstration example is needed to show stereo's superiority over mono, this disc in its two versions will fill the bill to perfection. In the mono form the solo voice emerges larger than life-size, even "ringing" a bit on certain notes; in the *Valkyrie* extract, on the other hand, it is the orchestra which is over-loud. On stereo the proportions are completely correct, and a convincing spatial relation-

ship is created between singer and orchestra; and all harshness is taken out of fortissimos which in the mono form sound a bit compressed—an example is the outburst in the *Fliedermonolog* when Sachs wonders whether he shouldn't stick to his last. Neither version is completely free of gremlins: on the mono there is a rhythmic grating sound from mid-way through *Wahn, Wahn* for nearly half the side, and on the stereo there is some wavering of pitch in *Valkyrie* at the slow chromatic chords after "So küsst er die Gottheit von dir". (In each case the other version is free from the trouble.) But do not let things like this stop you hearing these musicianly performances. L.S.

MARIA STADER. (a) **Manon** (Massenet): "Adieu notre petite table"; "Je marche sur tous les chemins"; "Obeissons... Profitons bien de la jeunesse". (b) **Carmen** (Bizet): "Je dis que rien ne m'épouvante". (c) **La Bohème** (Puccini): "Si mi chiamano Mimi". (d) **Madama Butterfly** (Puccini): "Un bel di vedremo". (e) **Gianni Schicchi** (Puccini): "O mio babbino caro". (f) **Turandot** (Puccini): "Signore, ascolta"; "Tu che di gel sei cinta". (g) **Faust** (Gounod): "Il était un roi de Thule"; "Air des bijoux". (h) **Romeo and Juliet** (Gounod): "Je veux vivre dans ce rêve". (j) **Marriage of Figaro** (Mozart): "Non so più"; "Voi che sapete". **Maria Stader** (soprano), with (a) and (g) **Munich Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Ferdinand Leitner**, (b), (c), (e) and (f) **Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Gustav König**, (d) **Munich Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Heinrich Hollreiser**, (h) and (j) **Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Leopold Ludwig**. D.G.G. DGM19157 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

This recital shows the soprano in a mellow light, and the French numbers which include a heartfelt *Manon* and an only slightly stodgy *Marguerite* bring out unexpected warmth and pathos in this gifted but often rather cool and cautious singer. She sings French reasonably well, though an occasional "soo-is" for *suis* or "je s'pose" is not unnoticeable and as *Mimi* she sings, like nearly all Germans, instead of "quella cosa", "kvella cosa". But in general she has the idiom right most of the time. In the *Manon* gavotte, what are presumably the gentlemen of the Munich opera chorus chime in. The trill in the *Jewel* song is only a heavy shake and the end of the song is slightly muffed, but it is quite a pleasing account. In the *Romeo* valse, she sings the opening glissando (whereas Galli-Curci achieves a perfectly graded course of staccato notes, like a silvery laugh). *Micaela's* aria is sung with distinction. Her "Un bel di" is touching and so it *Liù's* first aria, being beautifully phrased, though the hoped-for last touch of perfectly floated tone is not vouchsafed.

Cherubino's two songs are charmingly done, not perhaps with tremendous presence of character but not rushed.

In sum, if you have liked this singer's pure and reliable soprano in Mozart, etc., you will find here an extension of her art to embrace relatively more romantic music and give distinction also to popular pieces such as "O my beloved daddy". She might go very much further and while lacking it seems to me the slightly meretricious charm of *Schwarzkopf* or the personality of some of the other favourite German divas, we have here a developing artist. Meanwhile a thoroughly pleasing recital for all except the most exacting. Good recording and acceptable conducting. P.H.-W.

LJUBA WELITSCH. Tosca (Puccini): (a) Love Duet, Act 1 (with Richard Tucker, tenor); (b) "Vissi d'arte". **Der Zigeunerbaron** (Johann Strauss II): (c) "Habet acht". **Die Fledermaus** (Johann Strauss II): (d) *Czardas* **Don Giovanni** (Mozart): (e) "Don Ottavio! son morta! . . . Or sai, chi l'onore"; (f) "Crudele? Ah non, mio bene! . . . Non mi dir, bell'idol mio". **Ljuba Welitsch** (soprano), **New York Metropolitan Opera Orchestra** conducted by **Max Rudolf** except items (e) and (f) conducted by **Fritz Reiner**. Philips SBR6255 (10 in., 18s. 3d. plus 7s. 1½d. P.T.). Items (b), (e) and (f) previously available in this country on Columbia LB82 (8/49), LB124 (5/52) and LB121 (3/52) respectively. The remaining items have not been previously issued in this country.

This 12-inch LP recaptures gloriously the thrilling voice of Frau Welitsch at her best, which is something to be grateful for. Her version of Donna Anna's address to Ottavio (sung by *Alessio de Paolis*) is well known; the "Non mi dir" taxes the singer more highly and flurries her a little in the finish, but it is full of clean, fine vocal etching. Saffi's song from *Der Zigeunerbaron* and *Rosalinda's* *Czardas* have of course been made up by *Schwarzkopf* too, with slightly more opulence and certainly more "presence" in the recording sense. These performances are somewhat drier, in both senses: but it sounds like singing from a golden past, indeed notes in the *Czardas* have that elastic tension and thrill which can be heard in singers such as *Destinn* and *Nordica* (and not often since). The "Vissi d'arte" is a beauty; but the surprise here is the regal and sweeping entry of *Tosca* and the duet, sung with Richard Tucker also sounding splendid. This sounds like an actual performance; the sound is full and vivid, though the levels shift from time to time. But the aristocratic bearing, the verve and energy of the singers are a joy. Welitsch was apt to race Verdi off his legs, but it is splendid to hear Puccini sung up to time, and not with the modern Italian habit of coming in a fraction behind the beat. Recommended as a souvenir of a great artist, though the recording is not ultra modern. P.H.-W.



Maria Callas.

[Photo: Huston Rogers]

VERDI. *Macbeth*: "Nel di della vittoria"; "Vieni! t'affretta"; "La luce langue"; "Una macchia è qui tuttora!". *Nabucco*: "Ben io t'invenni"; "Anch'io dischiuse un giorno". *Ernani*: "Sorta è la notte"; "Ernani! Ernani, involami". *Don Carlos*: "Tu che le vanità". *Maria Meneghini Callas* (soprano), *Philharmonia Orchestra* conducted by *Nicola Rescigno*. Columbia 33CX1628 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 8½d. P.T.).

Lady Macbeth's arias; Abigail's big scene; Elvira's waltz song and caballetta; and the Queen's Prayer from *Don Carlos*. Mme Callas has seldom had such a field day and her dramatic instinct is well nigh perfect in interpreting these wonderful pages, each "characterised" convincingly—and differently.

There are some very curious hollow sounds in the middle and bottom of her compass; in the *Don Carlos* the word

"avei" might almost be breathed into a milk jug, so cupped is it. And where this superlative artist wishes to put a world of tenderness into the word "Francia", her means almost (but not quite) defeat her intention. The note is "cawed" rather than floated (compare Antonietta Stella, comparatively empty though that Elizabeth de Valois sounds). We cannot argue endlessly about this. Either you mind the flawed production of some notes and it spoils your pleasure in the total effect (in any case abundantly exciting), or you don't notice anything at all. I will say that the last off-stage arpeggio in the sleep-walking scene is, for this singer, remarkably steady; though one can't say the same for the end of "Tu che le vanità". The phrasing of "Ernani, involami" is most musical; it is a pity the caballetta has to sound so fierce and macaw-like, with a very rough trill and an escape from it which would have made Ponselle raise her eyebrows. Exciting? Yes. But so was Bianca Scacciati

and others of that ilk, often quoted as the beginning of the end.

However the *Macbeth* scenes, for which Verdi so much insisted on dramatic truth rather than smooth vocalization are very effective. I found a shade of distortion and pre-echo at side ends, but nothing need deter the Callas collector. P.H.-W.

EZIO PINZA. *Norma* (Bellini): "Ite sul colle, O Druidi". *Don Carlos* (Verdi): "Ella giammai m'amo . . . Domiro sol nel manto mio regal". *Ezio Pinza* (bass), *New York Metropolitan Opera Orchestra* conducted by *Fausto Cleva*. Philips ABE10083 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3½d. P.T.).

These are two fine examples of last-period Pinza, recorded soon after the war—his voice still coming out with beautiful smoothness, the tone lovely, and the focus firm and sure. Philip's aria is given a restrained, noble performance. There is no self-pity in it: the King looks with cold, honest eyes at his situation, and by reason of this restraint the dramatic touches—the sudden "Dove son", the bitterness which cannot be contained in the final phrases—are the more effective. The words are beautifully shaped. The *Norma* piece is also most enjoyable, though somewhat less vividly handled. This is partly the fault of Fausto Cleva, whose reading largely ignores the dynamics of Bellini's carefully worked score. Very little distinction is made between the two choral entries, the first of which ("Dell' aura tua profetica") should be *pp*, *con devota ferezza*, and the second ("Nella città dei Cesari") *ff con forza*. The chorus is also a little backward. The Verdi scena is presented complete with its long introduction and cello solo. In the Bellini, the introductory March is cut (which means that one doesn't hear enough of the "Ite sul colle" melody), but the scene is then complete right through to the druids' voices disappearing in the distance. A.P.

HISTORICAL RECORDS

HAYDN. *Symphonies*. No. 94 in G major, "Surprise": No. 101 in D major, "Clock". *N.B.C. Symphony Orchestra* conducted by *Arturo Toscanini*. R.C.A. RB16138 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 2½d. P.T.).

It is rare to find faults in the ensemble of the N.B.C. Symphony, but in this particular coupling there are traces of ruffled string-playing which may have been due to the impact of the maestro's icy glance at some particularly tense moment. There is nothing to worry about, as the flaws do not stand out uncomfortably, and there is some very fine woodwind playing by way of counter-balance. Keen ears will detect a slight difference in acoustic on changing sides, for the "Surprise" Symphony was recorded in Carnegie Hall (1953) and the "Clock" in Studio 3A, Radio City (1947). The former is the better of the two recordings, though some may find that the tempo adopted for the Minuet is almost ludicrously fast. One gets the impression of a courtly dance being

transformed into a bucolic hop by virtue of sheer shortage of time. There is, oddly enough, no comparable exaggeration in the Minuet of the "Clock" Symphony.

This is not the place to express enthusiasm about the music, but it's nevertheless true that however well we think we know Haydn's popular symphonies, there are always one or two apparently "new" features whenever a new recording or interpretation appears. Some collectors may have forgotten what a remarkable way Toscanini had with Haydn's symphonies; he may have streamlined them to a certain extent, but they have a clarity about them which is not always to be found in other versions. For sheer drive it would be hard to beat this issue. D.S.

AMELITA GALLI-CURCI. Les Pêcheurs des Perles (Bizet): "Comme autrefois" (9/9/21). **Roméo et Juliette** (Gounod): Valse (31/1/17). **Dinorah** (Meyerbeer): "Ombre légèr" (15/6/17). **Rigoletto** (Verdi): "Caro nome" (2/2/17). **La Traviata** (Verdi): "Ah, fors'è lui"; "Sempre libera" (both 7/3/19); "Addio del passato" (21/6/20). **Songs**. Air and Variations (13/9/17): "The last rose of summer" (15/6/17): "Lo hear the gentle lark" (4/9/19): (a) "Home sweet home" (16/5/28): (b) "My old Kentucky home" (12/12/28): "La capinera" (11/6/18). **Amelita Galli-Curci** (soprano) with Orchestra except (a) and (b) which have piano accompaniment. R.C.A. Camden GDN1004 (12 in., 19s. 9½d. plus 7s. 8½d. P.T.).

Francis Robinson in a fervent and moving sleeve note ends with the words, "After a generation Galli-Curci's voice falls sweeter than ever on the ear. It is a sound that made life dearer, the world better. It was a kindly light and it changed lives". Those who agree with that, and I do myself, will probably know these sides already. With the exception of *Home, sweet home* and *My old Kentucky Home* which were made when the voice had radically changed for the worse, the selection shows Galli-Curci at her best around nineteen-twenty. What singing! I am only sorry the 1917 "Una voce" could not have been got onto this disc too. The Bizet *Cavatina* is perfectly lovely; a scene about sleeplessness, it sounds dreamy as if the singer were already asleep. The limpid tone quality and flexibility of the singing is everywhere of a standard seldom to be found today. The "Caro nome" links us right into the great epoch of singing, with its lovely legato. The *Roméo* valse with its dreamy grace is another delight (compare the best version available from a modern singer, Mme Janine Micheau): this transfer does not avoid a heavy surface sound and, for me, a hint of pre-echo, but the pearly quality of the notes and the lightness of touch are a joy.

There is really no disputing about these things; if they haunt you as they have me ever since I heard them, you will unreservedly welcome this transfer of a voice and a vocal art which, hardly less than Caruso's, may be said to have made the gramophone. P.H.-W.

FELIA LITVINNE. Cavalleria Rusticana (Mascagni): "Voi lo sapete". **Lohengrin** (Wagner): "Elsa's Dream". **Aida** (Verdi): "I sacri nomi". **L'Africaine** (Meyerbeer): "Sur mes genoux". **Felia Litvinne** (soprano). Olympus ORE203 (7 in., 12s. plus 4s. 8½d. P.T.).

JEAN FRANCOIS DELMAS. Les Huguenots (Meyerbeer): Scene and solo from the *Benediction des poignards*. **Patrie** (Paladilhe): "Pauvre martyr obscur". **Faust** (Gounod): Serenade de Mephistopheles. **Jean François Maurel** (bass). Olympus ORE201 (7 in., 12s. plus 4s. 8½d. P.T.).

VICTOR MAUREL. Otello (Verdi): "Era la notte". **Falstaff** (Verdi): "Quand'ero paggio". **Don Giovanni** (Mozart): Serenata. **Ninon** (Tosti). **Victor Maurel** (baritone). Olympus ORE202 (7 in., 12s. plus 4s. 8½d. P.T.).

These are the first, attractively presented discs of a new series, under the care of Mr. Ronald Phillips, whose Collectors' Corner will be familiar to all London record collectors. Since Mr. Phillips has also acquired the rights and the original material of the Phonotype company, we may perhaps hope that a splendid De Lucia series of reissues is in preparation.

Félia Litvinne's "first Olympus Record", to quote the sleeve, is a neat gathering-up of the four Fonotipia sides she recorded in Paris in 1905. The Air du Sommeil is a different version from the one Belcantodisc have reissued; that (a 1907 Odéon) is accompanied by orchestra, and there are various other differences. I think the Odéon a more delicate performance and—knowing neither in the original—I must own that the voice sounds more "flame-like" in the Belcantodisc version. Still, the quality of Litvinne's singing (which I have written about before in these pages), its evenness, amplitude and solidity, is finely in evidence in all four excerpts, even though the surface of Elsa's Dream is heavy.

Delmas was formerly only a name to me; his has been an exciting voice to discover. Though, from both artistic and technical points of view, he is no Plançon, it is a very fine, firm, rich bass that we hear, with, perhaps, a richer warmth in the tone than Plançon's. Delmas recorded all four of these titles more than once, and even more than once within the time-bracket, 1905-6, mentioned on the sleeve: Olympus should in future follow Belcantodisc in giving details of the original material from which their discs are drawn. Delmas was presumably the bass in the 1900 Paris revival of Paladilhe's *Patrie*. He is often singled out for praise in Dukas' essays; after a Wotan in 1893, for example, Dukas wrote: "With his excellent diction, and his dignified, well-conceived gestures, M. Delmas has every quality that distinguishes the true lyric tragedian".

From this record we get some idea of the majestic, dignified bass. But it must be said that the two excerpts from *Les Huguenots* are not interesting music, and

that in the *Bénédiction des poignards*, Delmas is joined by the voices of three monks (his tone sounds through them strongly, however). The *Bénédiction* and the *Conjuration* have been placed in the wrong order, which is inexplicable. Pitch has been carefully considered on these records; and although the *Conjuration*, Saint-Bris' "Des troubles renaissants", is down a semitone from the printed score, it nevertheless sounds convincing, as if it had indeed been recorded in E flat.

It is excellent news that the original Iago's and Falstaff's "Era la notte" and "Quand'ero paggio" should be available again, in transcriptions which sound well. For a more detailed account of these, may I refer readers to Desmond Shawe-Taylor's essay on Maurel which appeared in the magazine *Opera* for May 1955. Both performances are masterly, rich in detail, strong in dramatic impact. Here, one feels, is Verdi's Iago and Verdi's Falstaff. At the same time, they are not just performances for you to put on and then sit back and listen to. With the *Otello* excerpt in particular, you must have the score, or at least, the words, in front of you, if you are to get the most out of it. So far as I am concerned, this side has to carry the other: for Maurel's account of the *Don Giovanni* Serenade is unrhythmical, uncharming, if not quite without interest (Shawe declared that Maurel was no Mozartian: we can believe it). He also makes heavy weather of the Tosti ballad. I would rather have found Tamagno's *Otello* as backing to this disc; but at the same time would not advise people not to be deterred by the coupling from obtaining the Verdi arias. A.P.

ROSA PONSELLE. La Vestale (Spontini): "Tu che invoco"; "O nume tutelâr" (18/5/26). **Ernani** (Verdi): "Ernani, involami!" (23/1/24). **Aida** (Verdi): "Pur ti revoglio"; "La, tra foreste vergine" (7/2/24 with Giovanni Martinelli, tenor). **La Gioconda** (Ponchielli): "Suicidio!" (14/1/25). **L'Africaine** (Meyerbeer): "In grembo a me" (14/1/25). **Clorinda** (Bellini): "Casta Diva" (31/12/28 and 30/1/29); "Mira, O Norma" (31/12/28 with Marion Telva, contralto), (both with Metropolitan Opera Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Giulio Selti). **La Forza del Destino** (Verdi): "La Vergine degli angeli" (23/1/28 with Ezio Pinza, bass, and Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Giulio Selti). "Pace, pace mio dio" (23/1/24). **Finale** (8/1/28 with Giovanni Martinelli, tenor and Ezio Pinza, bass). **A L'Aïd** (de Fontenailles) (31/10/39 with Romano Romani, piano). **Si tu le voulais** (Tosti) (31/10/39). **The Nightingale and the Rose, Op. 2, No. 2** (Rimsky-Korsakov) (6/2/27 with Clement Barone, flute). **On Wings of Dream** (Arensky) (1/11/39 with Romano Romani, piano and Mischa Elman, violin). **Ave Maria** (Kahn) (16/8/27). **Serenade** (Tosti) (11/4/24 with Francis Lapitino, harp). **Good-bye** (Tosti) (12/4/24). **A Vuccella** (Tosti) (18/5/26). **Luna d'Estate** (Tosti) (18/5/26). **Elégie** (Massenet) (19/5/26). **When I have sung my Songs** (Charles) (31/10/39 with Romano Romani, piano). **Rosa Ponselle** (soprano). R.C.A. Camden GDN1006-7 (two 12 in., 39s. 7d. plus 15s. 5d. P.T.).

These two records form one of the Camden reissues so desirable that many people must have endeavoured to procure it through American channels. More than once in these pages I have expressed the hope that Decca would bring it out over here: now here it is, low-priced, available in two parts, and filled with glorious singing. Edward Johnson, who was the Licinio to Ponselle's *Vestale*, declared that every vocal student should listen to these *Vestale* recordings at least once a week, as examples of the seamless

scales and "O nume tutelar", in particular, seems to me to offer some of the most beautiful and accomplished singing ever put on record.

The *Aida* Nile Duet will be new to many, since for a long time the first side was published only by I.R.C.C., the second not at all. Ponselle's delicate spinning of the descending triplets, *dolcissimo*, at "la terra scorderem" is superb; and the final note of the duet, B flats two octaves apart, is wonderful. The *Ermani* aria (with cabaletta) is also a pre-electric recording. There are touches of untidiness in the florid passage looping down through two octaves before the close of the cavatina; but set these against the extraordinarily beautiful dropping sevenths, *con grazia*, at "Ah vola, o tempo" in the cabaletta. Again, in the cabaletta of "Casta diva" there are one or two ends left flapping; but it could easily be claimed that this is the most rapt, mysteriously beautiful account of the much-recorded aria. The duet with Telva is also most beautiful.

Ponselle's voice has what we call a "dark" dramatic timbre—as opposed to, shall we say, the daylight shining stream of Boninsegna's tone. But at the same time there is nothing cloudy or impure in it (any veiling, as in "Casta diva", is done deliberately and artistically), and it too can take on a wonderful shine, warmth and radiance. A Ponselle crescendo on a single note can be an exhilarating, glorious experience. It is a voice that nature seems to have made for the great Verdi heroines, the voice of Leonora in *Forza*, Leonora in *Il Trovatore*, and Aida. If you imagine Milanov's spacious manner and ample and beautiful tone, used with some of Callas's intensity and sense of dramatic colouring, you get some idea of Ponselle. But no need to imagine anything: Ponselle is like only Ponselle, and here are her recordings!

It is hard to say which of the two discs to start with. Probably CND1006—more opera, fewer songs. The only sensible thing to do, however, is to buy both. *When I have sung my songs* is the least successful of what is otherwise a brilliant series of transfers. Few original 78s will sound so well. Is the pitch of the *Air du Sommeil* slightly high? A.P.

POETRY AND DICTION

NOEL COWARD. Poems. *The Boy Actor*; *Nothing is lost*; *Honeymoon*; *Mrs. Mallory*; *A Question of Values*; *Do I believe?*; *Letter from the Seaside*, 1890, 1901; *A Lady at a Party*; *Opera Notes*. **BERNARD SHAW. The Apple Cart.** *Interlude*. Read by Noel Coward and Margaret Leighton. Philips Caedmon TC1094 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

So far as I know this marks the début of Shaw on gramophone records. Mr. St. John Ervine's valedictory broadcast was issued and, of course, there are the famous Linguaphone records of the sage himself, but nothing till now to show how our generation got its teeth into the drama and transmuted the polemics into action. *The Apple Cart* is about the limitations of democracy, which was also the theme of a famous broadcast by G.B.S. in 1929. In this *Interlude* King Magnus confronts Orinithia with the hard logic of his position.

If at times we imagine we are hearing an extract from "Private Lives" we are merely reminded that public life will not be kept waiting long, even when disguised as Queen Jemima. All this is beautifully done, and this is indeed a virtuoso performance by Mr. Coward and Miss Leighton, who on the other side recite some of Mr. Coward's own poems (and banded too!). Of these *The Boy Actor*, an autobiographical piece, remembering that the author himself appeared in the first performance of *Where The Rainbow Ends*, and *Honeymoon* are well worth hearing. *Honeymoon* is indeed something of a work of art. The idea is accurately observed, and carried through to the difficult end with aplomb. The two *Letters from the Seaside* recreate their periods acutely, and *Opera Notes* throw up some fresh examples of verbal fun directed at the lyric stage. Altogether this is a record well worth investigating. R.W.

A. P. HERBERT. Vital Statistics. Mr. Banting. *The Garden.* *The British Nanny.* *Burglars Beware!* *T.V. Violence.* *Down They Go!* *The Way Out.* *Less Nonsense.* *Oh! Won't it be Wonderful.* *The King's Regulations.* Read and Sung by Sir Alan Herbert. Donegall DON-T700 (10 in., 20s. plus 7s. 10d. P.T.).

It has taken half a century to get A.P.H. personally onto disc, even though we have enjoyed his lyrics on countless records of musical shows for a long time. For those who were brought up on his rhymes and gentle parody of our national foibles, this record needs no recommendation but only a warning that some of the message here is not so gentle. Unlike the routine signatories of reformist letters to *The Times*, A.P.H. is sufficiently conformist for his message to be acceptable to the English middle class. Here is fun (*Vital Statistics* and *The Garden*), honest sentiment (*The British Nanny*—later to be brilliantly transformed into *Other People's Babies*, set by Vivian Ellis and sung by Norah Howard in the revue "Streamline"), information (*Mr. Banting*), social criticism (*Burglars Beware!* and *T.V. Violence*), economics (*The Way Out*) and two bursts of international heavy artillery that will make this record unplayable in certain circles and ensuring it a place on the same shelf as Noel Coward's *Don't let's be beastly to the Germans* and other salutary reminders of the facts of life. Indeed *Less Nonsense* is a piece of history in itself, and the author does not shrink from naming the paper that refused to print it, the factory where its eventual publication threatened a strike, and the Member of Parliament who asked a question in the House about it. We finish with that silly but always amusing pastime of setting prosaic words to Anglican chant, which is like asking the waitress for tea to Baroque recitative after an afternoon of Bach. Still, it is wonderful to have that classic of K.R.'s set to anything—"Field officers entering captive balloons are not required to wear spurs", a line only equalled by *The Manchester Guardian's* Christmas quiz question: "In round figures what is the average annual production of steam-rollers in Great Britain?" A.P.H. has done us all some service, and Donegall has put us all in their debt for issuing this record and for

persuading the author to dictate his own sleeve note, even though he still blames the Entertainment Tax for killing *The Water Gipsies!* R.W.

T. S. ELIOT. The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock; *Portrait of a Lady;* *Preludes;* *Mr. Eliot's Sunday Morning Service;* *Ash Wednesday;* *A Song for Simeon;* *Marina;* *Triumphal March from Coriolani;* *O Light Invisibile from the Rock;* *Chorus from Murder in the Cathedral;* *Chorus from Family Reunion.* Read by T. S. Eliot. Philips Caedmon TC1045 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

When T. S. Eliot recorded his *Four Quartets* his record duplicated a reading by Robert Speight, and the general verdict seemed to offer a choice between dull authenticity and the technique of the professional actor. But, of course, no great poet can possibly be dull. It is simply that Mr. Eliot's voice tends to be flat, neither rising nor falling. But, again, is it not right that these reflective, introspective poems should be so read? I have always believed in the romantic notion (often called romantic nonsense) that it is impossible to divorce the man from the artist. Here, then, is Mr. Eliot in person, and that is the point. If the personality seems circumscribed, then these poems are not for you, and nor is Mr. Eliot. For the most part these are early poems, starting in 1917 with the first three of the Prufrock set (*The Love Song* was recorded in an anthology by Robert Speight in 1953). Here is the complete *Ash Wednesday* (1930)—also included in the Speight record—and other poems that appear on record for the first time, notably *Mr. Eliot's Sunday Morning Service*, which begins with the line consisting of the single word "Polyphiloprogenitive", and which contains the words "pustular" and "placulative", which must make even Mr. Ivor Brown's mouth water! Nor is he afraid to rhyme "ices" with "crises". Here is one of the major influences of contemporary English letters at work, and the *Triumphal March* will surprise those who really think that the poet is a dull reader! R.W.

ARTHUR HOLZMAN. Israel is Born. Narrated by Arthur Holzman. Philips Caedmon TC1014 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

This is both a documentary and an adroit piece of propaganda. It tells the story of the Zionist movement, culminating in the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, following the end of the British mandate in Palestine. It includes the voices of Sir Alan Cunningham, the last High Commissioner, of Chaim Weizmann and David Ben-Gurion. It also includes the voice of Hitler and a reminder of the six million Jews who were the victims of Nazi persecution. There is a brief account of the war with the Arab States, and a dramatic moment when the Prime Minister departs from the script of his speech during an Arab raid, concerning which the narrator tells us that the aircraft were of British manufacture. An English reviewer must in fairness mention this, for the record is of American origin and is obviously aimed at the supporters of Zionism. We hear the casting of the votes in the United Nations Assembly—United Kingdom, Abstain; United States, Yes. Towards the end there is considerable repetition, with a

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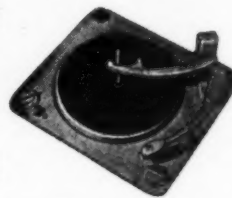
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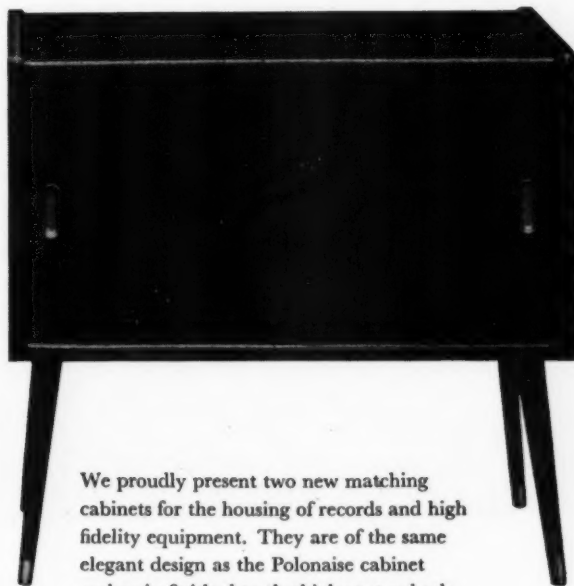
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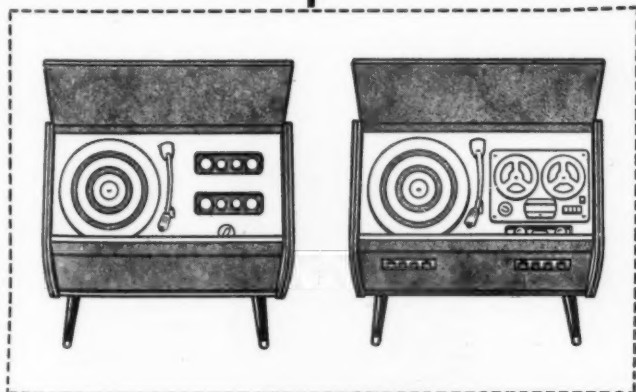
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jumble of snippets from Jewish life, suggesting that ten inches could have done the job better. (Is Caedmon averse to the ten inch format, or even EP?) The creation of sovereign States in a moment of time is something peculiar to our age, and whatever their ultimate destiny it is fitting that the gramophone should record just how one such came about, but this is the kind of record that should not be bought blind except by those devoted to the cause it presents. R.W.

WALTER DE LA MARE. Isn't it a Lovely Day?; A Little about Witches; Peace; The Veil; The Railway Junction; England; In a Library; The Scriber; Here I Sit; To a Candler; Music; All That's Past; Fare Well; Away; The Princess. Read by Walter de la Mare. Philips Caedmon TC1046 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

If T. S. Eliot sounds too antiseptic for you, Caedmon offer you this record of Walter de la Mare in complete contrast. It would be fascinating to know if there are people who will buy and enjoy both! Walter de la Mare must have made this record shortly before his death. Here is an old man talking to you by the fire; a decanter of port is at hand, and the cigar smoke is producing the kindly haze that evokes the memory of youth—or so it would seem. A record full of kindness, distilled by a gentle man, whose acute observation takes on a poetic form. Long before he starts to remember his poems (for they come off the disc as if suddenly recollected) he has startled you with an absurd account of a tree he once saw struck by lightning, and he then goes on to recall the words of the great jurist Lord Mansfield, to an old woman acquitted of witchcraft. By this time you are counting the titles listed and the bands on Side One and doing a reviewer's sums. What on earth can be on Side Two? But *The Princess* is not a poem at all. It is a story, a ghost story, and it begins at the end of Side One, and goes on over to the other side, and on, and on, and you listen till the decanter is empty and your cigar has gone out. A record of immense character.

R.W.

SHAKESPEARE. Complete and uncut texts, as edited by John Dover Wilson. *The Merchant of Venice.* Argo RG160-163 (four 12 in., 46 plus 42 6s. 10d. P.T.). *The Sonnets.* Argo RG142-4 (three 12 in., 44 10s. plus 41 5s. 11d. P.T.). Recorded by Members of the Marlowe Society of the University of Cambridge and Professional Players. Directed by George Rylands. Recorded under the auspices of the British Council. (Full texts are available from Argo, price 5s. each. Text, plus annotation and Glossary, price 18s.).

The first volumes in this complete recording of Shakespeare appeared last March. Relying on the spoken word rather than on acting or production, do they make their mark? *The Merchant of Venice* is a test case. It has a fantastic plot, mostly pasteboard characters, and would be memorable only for its poetry—except that Shakespeare found himself being carried away by Shylock, that forerunner of the great character studies of the later plays. If Shylock is made the star the producer must heighten the action and isolate the Jew. On these records the "star" is the verse, always well and often beautifully spoken, and Shylock is played down. The balance is, in fact, very skilfully achieved. Portia (all the actors are anonymous) is an expert in vocal

nuance, Bassanio is credible (no mean achievement), and Shylock compels the ear if not the heart.

In the recording of the *Sonnets* a most intriguing situation arises. By apt allocation of the readings to ten quite different voices something very like a play emerges. The problems of identity, speculation about "Mr. W.H." and the Dark Lady, guesses as to personal motive, all these fall into the background and we get a drama of ideas with Love, Lust, and Time as the protagonists. "Shakespeare", says George Saintsbury, "has here caught up the sum of love and uttered it as no poet has before or since". He sickens of lust and rails at time "whose cold hand", as Ivor Brown puts it, "touches all fresh and vivid growth".

"Yet do thy worst old Time. Despite thy wrong,
My love shall in my verse ever live young".

But to mundane matters. Who will listen to 154 sonnets on three long-playing records? It is difficult to find a favourite item (there are no scrolls) and even a single side makes hard listening, distilling, as it does, the concentrated essence of poetry. Yet it is perverse to cavil when the complaint is both of quality and quantity. The readings have character, are beautifully articulated and measured, and avoid completely the "poetic voice". One can only recommend the set unreservedly.

In both volumes the recording is exemplary. The speech is clear and forward, there are no intrusive sibilants and, apart from a trace of tape rumble in one part of the *Merchant*, there are no extraneous noises. The surfaces are quite silent.

JOHN GITTINS.

POETRY READINGS. Palgrave's Golden Treasury—excerpts. Read by Claire Bloom, Eric Portman and John Neville. Philips Caedmon TC0998-9 (two 12 in., 60s. plus 23s. 6d. P.T.).

These two records are difficult to review. Here are 54 well-loved poems read by three distinguished voices, and in such a case criticism can only be subjective. It is as if after fifty years of the gramophone we were confronted by a first recording of a work we had known since childhood in a nursery performance. First, then, as to the contents, for I have no sleeves or labels and cannot assume what information, if any, will be vouchsafed to the public. Most are short poems, including a rich haul of sonnets by Shakespeare, there are longer pieces, notably both *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* of Milton, Keats' *Ode to a Nightingale*, Shelley's *Ode to a Skylark* and Tennyson's *The Lotus Eaters*. Mention of Tennyson reminds us that the selection is not made from the original edition of Palgrave's anthology (1861), which deliberately excluded living poets and which bore a dedication to Tennyson. The most recent poet, originally included, was Samuel Rogers (died 1855), whose *A Wish* is appropriately spoken here. Subsequent editions became increasingly up to date. Francis Palgrave was Professor of Poetry at Oxford in the nineties, a post at present held by Professor W. H. Auden, and he called the famous anthology "The Golden Treasury of the Best

Songs and Lyrical Poems in the English Language", which gives a firm clue to the contents. These exclude narrative, dramatic or humorous poems, although we get Gray's *On a Favourite Cat Drowned in a Tub of Goldfishes*—pathetic rather than funny, and which ends with the line: "Nor all that glisters, gold"—a good misquotation question! Great actor though he is I find Eric Portman disappointing as a reader. He keeps dropping his voice, and too many lines come out as a loud whisper. John Neville can maintain a low pitch for long stretches, as in *Il Penseroso*, and he miraculously thickens his voice for Burns. Claire Bloom, our gramophone Juliet, draws on all her technique for *L'Allegro*, and generally will not disappoint her admirers. What this set chiefly lacks is any sense of production. The records are not banded, so that it is impossible to pick out a poem (surely the point of an anthology), there are no announcements, so that one must feverishly turn up the Palgrave index to check a title, and the presentation is generally flat.

R.W.

OSCAR WILDE. The Happy Prince; The Selfish Giant; The Nightingale and The Rose. Read by Basil Rathbone. Philips Caedmon TC1044 (12 in., 30s. plus 11s. 9d. P.T.).

Oscar Wilde may mean for each of us the Yellow Book, the comedy of manners, Reading Gaol, or even *De Profundis*. But if he had never entered Society, and still less if he had never left it, his name would live as long as Christendom, for outside of Holy Writ he was author of one of its loveliest stories. A generation ago Rex Palmer, whose voice represented Savoy Hill, recorded *The Selfish Giant* on a dark blue Columbia record, which I have always kept with Eric Coates' extraordinary music for it—in a Hylton recording arranged by Leighton Lucas, of all people. Now Basil Rathbone of the velvet voice, last heard in Edgar Allan Poe, restores it to the gramophone, along with *The Happy Prince* and *The Nightingale and The Rose* from the same collection. These beautiful stories are beautifully read, and that is all that readers will want to know. Yet by some quirk of chance this month also brings a mutilated and vulgarised version of *The Happy Prince* on Brunswick OE9410 (EP), on which Bing Crosby and Orson Welles (and supporting cast!) "perform" to music composed by Bernard Herrmann (heard here a year or two ago conducting the L.S.O.) and directed by the late Victor Young. If you try both these records on a child you will have to keep your fingers crossed till they ache.

R.W.

ELECTRONIC MUSIC

BADINGS. Cain and Abel—Electronic Ballet Music. Philips ABE10073 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3d. P.T.).

"Electronic music" is by most people (that is, those who have got even that far) often confused with *musique concrète*, and thought of as something nasty invented by knob-happy engineers; some of the millions who watched *Quatermass and the Pit* will have recognised the unearthly sounds as carefully prepared electronic effects; and doubtless the technical pundits, who know

all about it, talk glibly of things like multi-vibrators, photo-electric sirens, ring-modulators and multiple feedback. But though plenty of effects, mostly of an eerie, fantastic or sinister character, have been produced by electronic means, it is only recently that professional composers have started to explore the potentialities for serious creative works. One of the undoubted leaders in this field is the Dutch composer Henk Badings, and this ballet, written for and produced at the Holland Festival of 1956, is the first full-length composition of this kind to be issued on records. The aim, of course, is not to write music which would be performed by orthodox means, nor to ape conventional instrumental colours (though there are certain similarities in places, e.g. the sine-wave generator in the *Arioso* movement, which is like a preternaturally pure flute), but to use sounds of far wider range and qualities than are obtainable within the relatively limited scope of existing instruments, and to combine them in new syntheses. Not only new tone-colours, but rhythmic complexities and speeds impossible by human means, wider pitch limits, new dynamic nuances and new acoustical relationships are all made possible, and the extensive application of different varieties of filter and reverb-eration provides the composer with a rich new palette.

The important thing, of course, is not so much the new resources as how far the composer's creative imagination can control them and make of them something of artistic value. Individual sounds may occasionally jar, or appear grotesque—the "destructive forces" in the third section of the ballet sound rather like two large cats spitting at each other—but there are some beautiful, and many striking, things here too, and the final section of the murder and the branding of Cain makes a deep impression. Listening with an open mind, I found much of this ballet not merely intellectually fascinating, but often aurally and emotionally exciting too—and one becomes able to accept the novel sonorities and concentrate on the artistic impulse better at each hearing. L.S.

MUSIC FOR SCHOOLS

TRADITIONAL. *Eight Ring Singing Games* (arr. Desmond MacMahon). Vocal and Instrumental Ensemble conducted by Dr. Desmond MacMahon. Paxton PR656-7 (two 10 in. 78s, 5s. plus 1s. 11½d. P.T. each).

COURT DANCES. *Eight 18th-Century Dances* (arr. Desmond MacMahon). Instrumental Ensemble conducted by Dr. Desmond MacMahon. Paxton PR609-700 (two 10 in. 78s, 5s. plus 1s. 11½d. P.T. each).

Dr. MacMahon has orchestrated these fine tunes in a most skilful manner and in a way which will appeal to children: he has succeeded in preserving the mode of the period and has given them variety and vitality without in any way destroying the effectiveness of their fine melodic outlines.

Singing and acting games can be a breathless affair for young children, but here the records provide both singing and accompaniments, so that the children can concentrate upon interpreting the games. Alternatively, they can sing with the recorded choir and experience the thrill of

singing with an orchestra. Both the soloist and children's choir are excellent and every word can be heard. The orchestral playing is good throughout whilst the recording and instrumentation is clear, with an excellent balance of parts.

Each set of records is contained in an attractive folder containing the words of the songs and melodies of the dances respectively, with full directions for carrying them out. In addition, two explanatory books, with pianoforte accompaniments, are published by Paxton (Singing Games 3s.; 18th-Century Dances, 4s.).

STEPHEN MOORE.

CLASSICAL REISSUES

JASCHA HORENSTEIN *Classical Symphony* (Prokofiev). *Colonne Concerts Orch.* Vox VIP40100 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3½d. P.T.). From PL9170 (10/55).

Only one symphony this month, but a popular one that seems constantly to be coming out on EP. Horenstein's performance is a good one and, as M.M. remarked in the original review, he makes one or two good points that most other conductors miss—though he (or his recorders) miss the cheeky bassoon at the end of the Gavotte. A clean and good balance but a rather limited range of sound detracts from some of the vivid contrasts of dynamics, especially in the first movement. However, it is certainly to be considered with Fricsay's and Goossens', also on EP. T.H.

EUGEN JOCHUM. *Don Juan* (Richard Strauss). *Concertgebouw.* Philips ABE10092 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3½d. P.T.). From ABR4009 (10/54).

JONEL PERLEA. *Vilava* (Smetana). *Bamberg S.O.* Vox VIP45620 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3½d. P.T.). From PL9500 (12/57).

SIR THOMAS BEECHAM. *Capriccio Italiano* (Tchaikovsky). *Columbia S.O.* Fontana CFE15028 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3½d. P.T.). From Columbia 33CX1037 (4/53).

SIR MALCOLM SARGENT. *The Planets* (Holst): Uranus; Neptune. *B.B.C. S.O. and Women's Chorus.* H.M.V. 7ER5123 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3½d. P.T.). From ALP1600 (9/58).

Here are the larger of this month's various orchestral reissues. I confess I have never much enjoyed Jochum's account of *Till Eulenspiegel*, finding its middle section too drawn out and slow, while some of the rest lacks sweep and breadth. But what makes me certain that I cannot recommend the record is that the recording is so badly balanced: cymbals at the start that lift you out of your seat, strident and over-dominant trumpets, and a general texture that is nothing like as good as it should be. The turn-over is not well chosen in this EP version: it comes at the comma between the E flats (six bars after letter N in the score), thus making nonsense of the comma, whereas a break at the G major at N itself would surely have been more satisfactory to the ear as well as for the music.

Perlea's conducting of *Vilava* is also something I find it impossible to be enthusiastic about, it's so lethargic and dull. It begins with what sound like flute exercises (contrast Toscanini here) and never gives any really vivid portrayal of the various scenes. I don't think the recording helps (is the lack of horns in the hunting scene due to this?) and my impression is that the

original LP was better—but my copy of this EP was so warped that the moonlight wobbled most unsteadily.

Now, lest you should think I am in a grumpy mood, for two really good reissues. Sir Thomas shows what can be done with the old Tchaikovsky warhorse and extracts an astonishing amount of poetry from the opening. This is more than a performance by a good orchestra playing with virtuosity, the turn comes at a sensible moment, and the sound of the 1953 issue is still really excellent.

But better still is the sound of the two pieces from *The Planets*, for it is really superb. I do hope this record will be popular, for everyone goes for *Mars* and *Jupiter*, while these two well contrasted pieces could so easily be as popular. *Uranus, the Magician* is a marvellous bit of scoring, with a captivating tune in it, while the atmosphere of *Neptune, the Mystic* should grip anybody. Sir Malcolm's performances are as fine as one could imagine and they are wonderfully conveyed by the recording. T.H.

***GEORG SOLT.** *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* (Mozart). *Israel P.O.* Decca Stereophonic SEC5007 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3½d. P.T.). From SXL2046 (1/59).

ROLF REINHARDT. *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* (Mozart). *Pro Musica Orch., Stuttgart.* Vox VIP45250 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3½d. P.T.). From PL9780 (12/56).

MORALT/E. STRAUSS. *Waltzes by Johann Strauss.* (a) *Reces from the South*; (b) *Vienna Bonbons*; (c) *Tales from the Vienna Woods*; (d) *Voices of Spring*. *V.S.O./Moralt.* Philips GBRF532 (10 in., 20s. plus 7s. 10d. P.T.). (a) and (b) from NBR0012 (2/55), (c) and (d) from ABL3002 (8/54).

***ERNEST ANSERMET.** *Carmen* (Bizet): Prelude; *Aragonaise*; *Intermezzo*; *Danse Bohème*. *Suisse Romande Orch.* Decca Stereophonic SEC5009 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3½d. P.T.). From SXL2037 (1/59).

Now for the month's lighter orchestral offerings. I enjoyed the string playing in both versions of *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* and only find it such a pity that this work on EP seems to necessitate a turn-over in the slow movement—both place it just before the minor section, which is as good a spot as one could find. Solti's performance has magnificent string playing and it sounds better than I remember it on the original Stereo LP. As an interpretation it is all very cheerful and bright. Reinhardt's earlier recording has not quite so attractive a sound (though it is still very good) and I imagine he uses a smaller body of strings (which is no bad thing). He gives a neat and attractive performance. (Note that the Solti disc is stereophonic.)

The disc of Strauss waltzes gave me a great deal of enjoyment, though I wished Moralt had conducted both sides. Eduard Strauss has the right idea in not hurrying a Viennese waltz but he doesn't understand how to tauten the rhythm and tempo from time to time as Moralt does: so you begin by thinking him excellent and end by finding him dull. *Tales from the Vienna Woods* has a zither in its Introduction and again in the Coda, as it should. One side, in fact, is quite good, the other is wholly delightful. (The original of the Eduard Strauss side, by the way, is deleted.)

And then, Ansermet's excellent *Carmen Suite* from his stereo LP, orchestral *Carmen* at its very best, both in performance and in

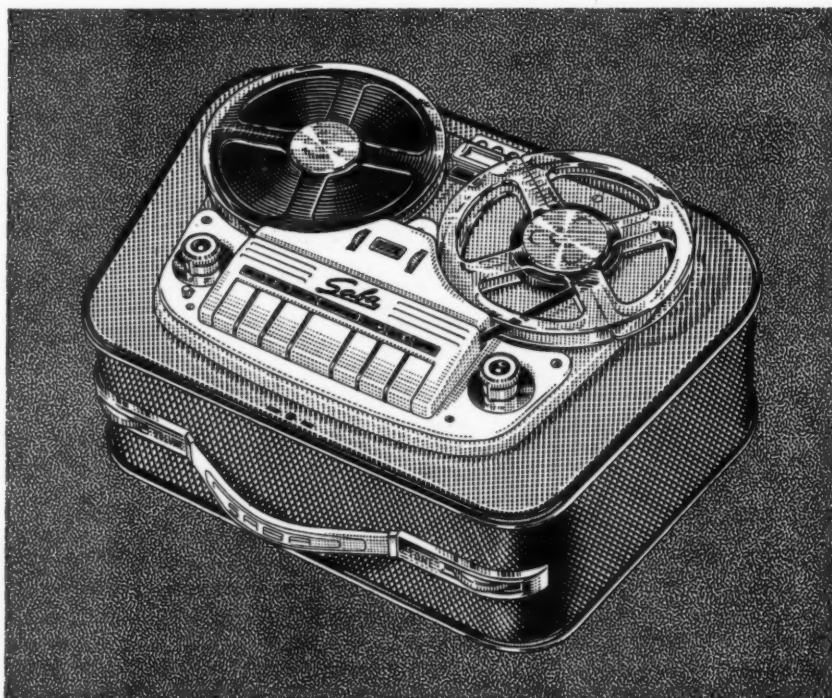
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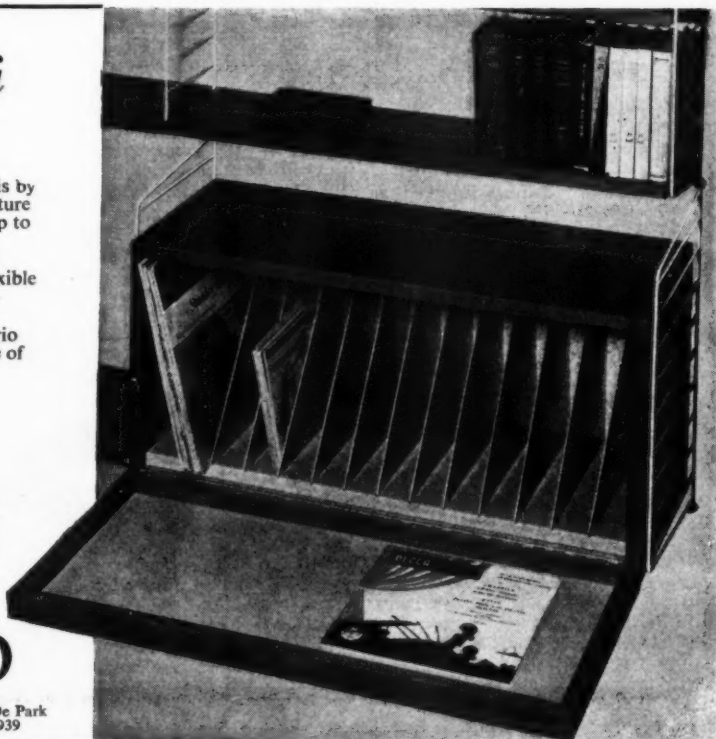
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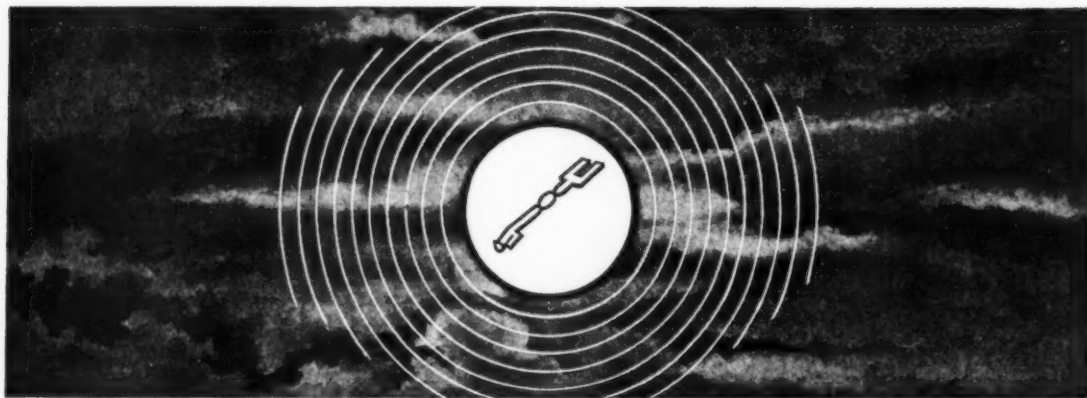
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IGOR MARKEVITCH. *William Tell* (Rossini): Overture. French National R.O. Columbia SEL1607 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3d. P.T.). From 33CX1560 (9/58).

CHARLES MACKERRAS. Overtures. *Alzira*; *Luisa Miller* (Verdi). Philharmonia. H.M.V. 7EP7080 (7 in., 9s. 3d. plus 3s. 7d. P.T.). From DLP1185 (6/58).

Both reissues of overtures are strongly recommended. **Markevitch's William Tell** fits on to an EP very well, with its clearly defined sections and the performance gives us a beautifully played introduction, with the rest of it very bright and exciting—a bit too exciting a tempo for the trombones in the storm, perhaps, for they don't have a chance to be as telling as they can be, given a bit more chance to speak. Still, this is very good Rossini playing. And so is the Verdi playing that **Mackerras** gets from the Philharmonia, recorded here with an outstandingly good acoustic. *Alzira*, which is a rarity, is played with first-class rhythm and style, while the dark and moody *Luisa Miller* makes an excellent contrast. T.H.

MOURA LYMPANY. *Preludes, Op. 28* (Chopin): Nos. 17-24. H.M.V. 7EP7079 (7 in., 9s. 3d. plus 3s. 7d. P.T.). From CLP1051 (10/55).

CYRIL SMITH. (a) *Nocturne, Op. 15, No. 2* (Chopin). (a) *Waltz, Op. 64, No. 1, "Minute"*; *Waltz, Op. 70, No. 1* (Chopin). (b) *Prelude, Op. 32, No. 5, "Prelude, Op. 25, No. 5 (Rachmaninov)"*. Columbia SED5558 (7 in., 9s. 3d. plus 3s. 7d. P.T.). (a) From DX1800 (2/52), (b) from DX1279 (10/46).

The more considerable of the piano records is that of the eight *Preludes* of Chopin taken from **Moura Lympany's** complete recording. These are well played, though when I read A.R.'s rave notice of the original, I felt I couldn't go as far as that. But they are most musically played and with the right sense of poetry. The piano tone sounded a trifle shallow, but whether that is due to the year of its issue or to its transfer to 45 r.p.m., I don't know. But the deficiency is not enough to worry anyone unduly. **Cyril Smith's** pieces are of much older vintage and it is important to note their dates when considering them—the Rachmaninov pieces go back to 1946. In fact, the piano quality is remarkably good and, as often happens, better on the older side—good coarse groove is often better than early LP. But there is a great deal of background on the older side and a good deal of it on the 1952 recording, too. The "Minute" Waltz is a bit inelegant and the Rachmaninov G minor Prelude is rather rattled off: but I enjoyed the rest, especially the other two Chopin pieces. T.H.

HELMUT WALCHA. *Prelude and Fugue in A minor, BWV 543* (Bach). D.G.G. Archive EPA37102 (7 in., 12s. plus 4s. 8d. P.T.). From APM14507 (6/58).

ALBERT SCHWEITZER. *Bach Organ Works.* (a) Choral Prelude—"O Mensch bewein' dein' Sünde Gross, BWV 652"; (b) Toccata and Fugue, in D minor; (c) Choral Prelude—"Nun komm der Heiden Heiland, BWV 659"; (d) Prelude and Fugue, in F minor; Philips GBR6530 (10 in., 20s. plus 7s. 10d. P.T.). (a) and (c) From ABL3197 (12/57), (b) ABL3134 (9/56) and (d) from ABL3092 (3/56).

If you want exciting organ playing, neither of these discs is for you. **Walcha** gives a reflective performance of the Bach *Prelude and Fugue* and I find it a touch over sober. **Schweitzer's** playing is recommended for scholars and all devotees (whether of Schweitzer or of Bach). Both

discs have some noticeable surface. **Walcha's** has rather more at the start than we are accustomed to get from D.G.G., while the **Schweitzer** record has a good deal of it on the second side. T.H.

CARLO BERGONZI. (a) *Tosca* (Puccini): Recondita armonia; E lucevan le stelle. (b) *Manon Lescaut* (Puccini): Donna non vidi mai. (c) *Madama Butterfly* (Puccini): Addio fiorito asil. St. Cecilia Academy Orch. conducted by (a) and (b) **Gavazzeni** and (c) **Serafin**. Decca CEP681 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3d. P.T.). Decca Stereophonic SEC5011 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3d. P.T.).

Items (a) and (b) from LXT5407 (3/58), (c) from LXT5408-70 (2/59).

FAMOUS ARIAS. (a) *Carmen* (Bizet): La fleur que tu m'avais jetée. *Del Monaco* (ten.). New S.O. of London/Erede. (b) *L' Africana* (Meyerbeer): O Paradiso. **Bergonzi** (ten.). St. Cecilia Orch./Gavazzeni. (c) *Tosca* (Puccini): Vissi d'arte. **Cerquetti** (sop.). Florence May Festival Orch./Gavazzeni. *La Bohème* (Puccini): Si, mi chiamano Mimi. **Zeani** (sop.). Florence May Festival Orch./Gavazzeni. Decca CEP682 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3d. P.T.). Item (a) from LXT5202 (7/56), (b) from LXT5407 (3/58), (c) from LXT5289 (6/57), (d) from LXT5317 (7/57).

ANTONIETTA STELLA. *Madama Butterfly* (Puccini): Un bel dì vedremo. **Gianni Schicchi** (Puccini): O mio babbino caro. *La Fanciulla del West* (Puccini): Laggiu nel Soledad. *La Bohème* (Puccini): Si, mi chiamano Mimi. L.S.O./Erede. H.M.V. 7ER5092 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3d. P.T.). From ALP1428 (2/57).

***RENATA TEBALDI.** (a) *Adriana Lecouvreur* (Cilea): Ecco respiro appena... Io son l'umile ancella; Poveri fiori. (b) *La Forza del Destino* (Verdi): Son giunta... Madre, madre, pietosa Vergine. St. Cecilia Academy Orchestra/Molinari-Pradelli. Decca Stereophonic SEC5010 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3d. P.T.). (a) From SX12043 (1/59), (b) appears in stereo for the first time.

BIRGIT NILSSON. *Un Ballo in Maschera* (Verdi): Ecco l'orrido campo; Ma dall' arido. *La Forza del Destino* (Verdi): Pace, pace, mio Dio. **Philh./Ludwig**. Columbia SEL1806 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3d. P.T.). From 33CX1522 (4/58).

Carlo Bergonzi seems to me the most winning of all current Italian tenors. He's better represented in his Puccini recital than in the anthology, where his "O Paradiso" is not under perfect control, with a very sharp final note. Even here his care over words and his musicianship and the tingle in his high notes all score heavily. His double-sided recital is most impressive, with lovely spin and legato in "Donna non vidi mai" (in the stereo version his voice is gloriously haloed by the strings, but otherwise one version isn't eccentrically better than the other), a very convincing humanity in Pinkerton's expression of remorse, and great charm in Cavaradossi's arias. He seems to have the best of both worlds: body of tone that never degenerates into simple vocal beefcake, an incisive projection that never detracts from the sun soaked gleam in his voice. Appropriately the sleeve shows him by the Tiber with the Castel Sant' Angelo in the background.

The rest of the four-handed recital is fairly ordinary. **Zeani** sings Mimi's life-story musically, but without much thought about the words—which are important. **Del Monaco** calls out the Flower Song in near-French, unsuited but quite agreeable. **Cerquetti's** "Vissi d'arte" very nearly comes off; the nobility and amplitude of lovely tone make you at each phrase expect a shade more nuance, a more perfect poise than in fact she achieves.

Miss **Stella's** second extract of Puccini contains some nice things, but is never really in the top class. I like her spontaneous, quasi-conversational narrative in "Un bel dì", and her fresh tone in "O mio babbino", but not the embarrassing sobs and not the

pinched top C in Minnie's aria, nor the suggestion of hurrying over the A's in "Mi chiamano Mimi". There's some pre-echo about, and in *Butterfly* the orchestra doesn't sound well.

The grandeur of vocal conception is what one usually admires in anything that **Tebaldi** sings; in this well worth while 45 too, but I was most stirred by her soft, throw-away singing, and the thrilling *di voce* in "Madre, pietosa vergine" (spoiled only by the flatness of the choir). The theatrical atmosphere of the performances and the sensible balance of voice and orchestra are good points to the disc; slightly enhanced in stereo, but already vivid in mono. **Birgit Nilsson** produces some impressive tones in her two Verdi arias, but it all sounds rather cold and characterless after her Wagner singing; very few consonants in the vocal line—this *Leonora* comes out of the cave calling mysteriously for "Archie, Archie", not a character who figures in the cast list of *Forza*. W.S.M.

KARL BOHM. *Così fan tutte* (Mozart): Come scoglio immota resta; Non siate ritrosi... E voi ridete; Un'aura amorosa; Una donna a quindici anni. *Della Casa* (sop.), **Kunz** (bar.), **Schoeffler** (bass-bar.), **Dermota (ten.), **Loose** (sop.), V.P.O. Decca CEP672 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3d. P.T.). From (12/55) LXT5107-9.**

MARIA CEBOTARI. (a) *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Mozart): E Susanna non vien!... Dove sono. (b) *Don Giovanni* (Mozart): Crudele?... Non mi dir. (a) **Philh./Krips**, (b) V.P.O. H.M.V. 7ER5126 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3d. P.T.). (a) From DA1875 (2/48) and (b) from DB6735 (9/48).

BELLINI. *La Sonnambula*: Come per me sereno; Vi ravviso o luoghi ameni; Ah! non credea mirarti; Ah! non giunge. **Pagliughi** (sop.), **Siepi** (bass), **Tagliavini** (ten.). Radiotelevisione Italiana S.O. and Cetra Chorus/Capua. Cetra EP00315 (7 in., 12s. plus 4s. 3d. P.T.). From LPC1240 (8/57).

The Decca *Così* yields a mixed bag of excerpts. **Della Casa's** "Per pietà" has already been reissued (though not on 45) and here is Fiordiligi's first aria, slightly curdled in tone, most successful at the top of the treble stave, less so at the lower end of those alpine descents, or in the athletic divisions. **Emmy Loose** (not named on the front cover) is just below form in "Una donna", **Dermota** as suave and glacial as ever. Best of the bunch is **Kunz** in Guglielmo's catalogue of Albanian allure, which goes straight into the ensuing trio. The orchestra sounds a shade fuzzy on this disc, but the wind contributions to "Come scoglio" are as clear as they are artistic.

Also in the Mozart department is a welcome souvenir of **Cebotari**. This is warm, generous singing such as we don't hear in Mozart nowadays. The attack is frequently from below the note, and the divisions are of the optimistic, scenic railway variety; but these are real performances that communicate musical feeling as dead accuracy sometimes doesn't. The recordings, which date from the 1940s, have been transferred in good condition.

The *Sonnambula* extracts used to be available in Italian pressings. The British reissue comes in a sturdy polythene sleeve that offers an example to other firms; E.M.I. still believe that EPs don't need polythene covering. No information but the titles and artists on the sleeve; nothing about the story, let alone texts (which E.M.I. sometimes offer). **Pagliughi's** *Amina* is well

known by now: sweet and radiant, not ideally steady. **Tagliavini** was in marvellous voice in those days, **Siepi** not yet well-focused of voice. The orchestra sounds backward. There is a chorus in attendance for "Ah non giunge". This is the largest *Somnambula* anthology currently available, and good value. W.S.M.

LORTZING. (a) *Undine*: Was seh' ich? **Ludwig** (ten.), **Blankenheim** (bass), **Bamberg S.O./Reinshagen**. **NICOLAI.** (b) *The Merry Wives of Windsor*: In einem Maschkorb. **Wächter** (bar.), **Borg** (bass), **Munich P.O./Leitner**. D.G.G. EPL30277 (7 in., 12s. plus 4s. 8d. P.T.). (a) From DGM19010 (7/58), (b) from DGM19049 (11/58).

KIRSTEN FLAGSTAD. *Lohengrin* (Wagner): Einsam in truben Tagen. *Tannhäuser* (Wagner): Ich sah' das Kind. **V.P.O./Knappertsbusch**. Decca CPS73 (7 in., 11s. plus 4s. 3d. P.T.). From (12/56) LXT5249.

PETER PEARS. *Folk Songs*. (a) The Foggy, foggy dew; (b) The Ploughboy; (c) Come you not from Newcastle; (d) Six Dukes went a-fishing; (e) O Waly Waly. **Britten** (piano). H.M.V. 7EP7071 (7 in., 9s. 3d. plus 3s. 7d. P.T.). Items (a), (b) and (c) from DA1873 (1/48), items (d) and (e) from DA2032 (4/53).

The *Merry Wives* duet is the Falstaff-Ford one (the German equivalent of "E in Windsor una dama") with its jovial concluding section "Wie freu' ich mich". **Wächter** sings extremely well, and the duet is well conducted, but **Borg** is that impossibility, a dull Falstaff—too much porridge and not enough sack. The *Undine* duet is the Journey one for Veit and Hans, nicely sung and an attractive piece; I was most struck by the sonorous and sympathetic tones of **Blankenheim**. A coupling like this badly needs some explanation on the envelope, but D.G.G. appear to think it unnecessary.

Elsa's Dream was the least successful item in **Flagstad's** 12-inch Wagner recital, and I don't love it any more as an EP. All her low tones are superb, and so the Herzeleid story is marvellous; but the higher tessitura of Elsa finds the first omens of rust in the voice that is still a great instrument, and sometimes the tone is unfocused too.

The **Pears/Britten** folksongs are resurrected from 78s and so are older than the ones already issued by Decca on MP and EP. There's a bit of surface noise, but Pears's voice was under able control then as now, and in each of these songs you remark his verbal inflexion and the exemplary clarity of enunciation, and in *The Foggy Dew* I was struck by the poised legato that I had thought was one of his later achievements. A most desirable selection of songs. W.S.M.

ENRICO CARUSO. (a) *Aida* (Verdi): Celeste Aida (27/12/11). (b) *Forse del Destino* (Verdi): Solenne in quest'ora (with Scotti, 13/3/06). (c) *Rigoletto* (Verdi): Questa o quella; La donna è mobile (both 13/3/06); Bella figlia dell'amore (with Galli-Curci, Perini and de Luca, 25/1/17). (d) *Otello* (Verdi): Si pel ciel (with Ruffo, 8/1/14). (e) *Il Trovatore* (Verdi): Ai nostri monti (with Homer, 17/3/08). *Songs*: (f) O sole mio (5/2/16); (g) Vaghiissima sembianza (15/9/20); (h) Compagnia di San Giusto (16/1/19); (i) La Partida (10/7/18); (k) Noche feliz (14/9/20); (l) Over There (11/7/18); (m) Sei morta nella vita mia (16/4/18); (n) Luna d'estate (5/2/16). **Caruso** (ten.) with Orch. except in item (m) which has piano acc. R.C.A. KB16128 (12 in., 28s. 9d. plus 11s. 24d. P.T.). Items (a) to (e) from H.M.V. CSLF510 (1/57), items (f) to (n) from H.M.V. CSLF612 (1/57).

The R.C.A. two-disc set, *The Best of Caruso*, the second instalment of which is listed above, is an intelligent condensation from the now deleted three-disc *The Art of Caruso*, in H.M.V.'s "Golden Treasury". The European recordings have had to be taken out, of course; and—as in the case of

every anthology—there are other missing pieces which many people would want to include among "the best of Caruso": the *Macbeth* aria, "Ah la paterna mano", for example. Most of the transfers sound extremely well, though occasionally the "rehabilitation" process mentioned on the sleeve seems to have gone too far. The Caruso/Scotti "Solenne in quest' ora" seems to have acquired a somewhat cavernous and drony sound, and the final note of "La donna è mobile" is prolonged by "echo chamber" effect.

One side is Verdi, the other canzoni—and how wonderful some of these canzoni are: the stirring *Campana di San Giusto*, the marvellously lifelike *Sei morta nella vita mia*, the sentimental *Vaghiissima sembianza* (though here the electrically "recreated" version has been used, with detriment to the sound of the voice); and *Over There*—one verse in Neapolitan English, the second in French—which is one of the records that most completely embodies the adorable character

that we know from Dorothy Caruso's book: unselfconscious, irresistible, filled with infectious brio. No one who missed *The Art of Caruso* will want to be without the new R.C.A. set. A.P.

GREGORIAN CHANT. *Easter Sunday Mass*: Proprium. **Benedictine Monks' Choir of St. Martin, Beuron**, directed by **Maurus Pfaff**. D.G.G. Archive EPA37001 (7 in., 12s. plus 4s. 8d. P.T.). From APM14017 (3/55).

The disc from which the above material is taken contained not only the chants of the Proper and the Ordinary of the Mass for Easter Sunday, but also the liturgical "recitatives", *Epistle, Gospel, Preface, Pater Noster*, etc. It was a good idea to put the Proper on this little disc so that those who cannot afford the complete presentation may have access to these splendid chants. As I remarked in my review of APM14017, the singing is virile in tone and prayerful in spirit, if a little rigid and lacking in nuance. The recording is admirably spacious. A.R.

PASSING NOTES

By ARTHUR JACOBS

Peter Pears, whom we shall be hearing shortly in the long-awaited complete recording **Britten's** *Peter Grimes*, made six appearances in a week at a hotel recently. No, he has not been lured into singing *Because* with somebody's Palm Court Orchestra. It was, he told me, a hotel "with a slight uplift to it" near Garmisch in Bavaria—where, incidentally, Richard Strauss used to live. For a week of British music, Peter Pears was invited there with **Benjamin Britten**, **Julian Bream**, and the Saltire Singers under **Hans Oppenheim**. "They had about two hundred people staying in the hotel, and about four hundred more came in for concerts", Mr. Pears told me.

I do not know any British hotel "with a slight uplift", but even an unuplifted one might find a week of serious music a profitable winter attraction. (Though, admittedly, they could probably not provide Garmisch's ski-ing facilities as well.) The mere social hob-nobbing with the famous would attract many music-lovers. Meanwhile Mr. Pears, Mr. Britten and Mr. Bream have all appeared at a notable yet sad London concert—a memorial to the late Erwin Stein, who, as music-publishing executive and as a friend, gave Britten much encouragement. I cannot rate Britten's new *Nocturne* for voice and orchestra, which this concert introduced to London, so highly as the previous Britten song-cycles with orchestra which Mr. Pears has already recorded (*Les Illuminations* and the *Serenade*, on Decca LXT2941) but the marvel of that superbly expressive voice continues.

We are, I gather, to have more records from Pears soon, and not only of Britten's music. Meanwhile with Julian Bream—of whom he spontaneously said, "I don't think we've had a player like him for three hundred years"—he is off on a short visit to Canada.

Often enough an English ensemble imports a Continental star to add a special lustre. But now I am happy to report the opposite. At the invitation of the Barylli Quartet in Vienna (led by **Walter Barylli** of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra) the English clarinetist **Jack Brymer** has been visiting them and

recording chamber music. The records already standing to Brymer's name as a soloist represent only a tiny fraction of his work for the gramophone, for he is also the principal clarinetist of Sir Thomas Beecham's Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. He instanced Bantock's *Fifine at the Fair*, Goldmark's *Rustic Wedding* symphony, "and of course *Scheherazade*" as among his most important recordings. He is also principal clarinet for the London Baroque Ensemble.

Now forty-three, Brymer was a schoolmaster teaching music and physical training in Croydon until Sir Thomas summoned him to the Royal Philharmonic in 1947. Who told Sir Thomas of Brymer's gifts? "That's never been discovered", he answers, "but several people take the blame". Anyway, I would rank Beecham's elevation of Brymer with his famous plucking of the late Albert Sammons out of a café orchestra.

I know of no reliable and up-to-date book in English on modern French, German, or Italian music—or, if it comes to that, on English music. (I emphasize the up-to-date.) But here, rather surprisingly, comes a book on *Norwegian Music*, by Kristian Lange and Arne Ostvedt (Dobson, 15s.), concisely and lucidly written and taking the reader up to the promised opening this year of a Norwegian National Opera with **Kirsten Flagstad** as general director. The reader is not put off by any exaggerated claims for Norwegian composers, even if he is puzzled to read that Grieg used a "bi-triple" chord. (What is that, please?)

I take this opportunity of noting that one of the best books on any English composer, *Gustav Holst* by his daughter, Imogen Holst, has now been reissued after being long out of print (O.U.P., 21s.). One bare sentence about the first hearing of *The Planets* has always intrigued me: "During *Jupiter* the charwomen working in the corridors put down their brushes and began to dance". Who witnessed this Orpheus-like magic, since presumably everyone connected with the composer was inside the auditorium? And what were the charwomen doing at Queens Hall on a Sunday during a concert?

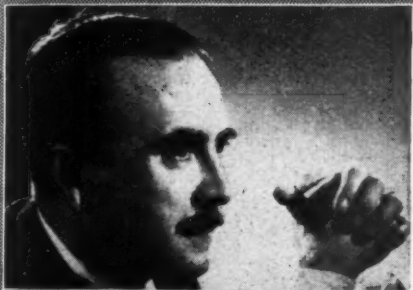


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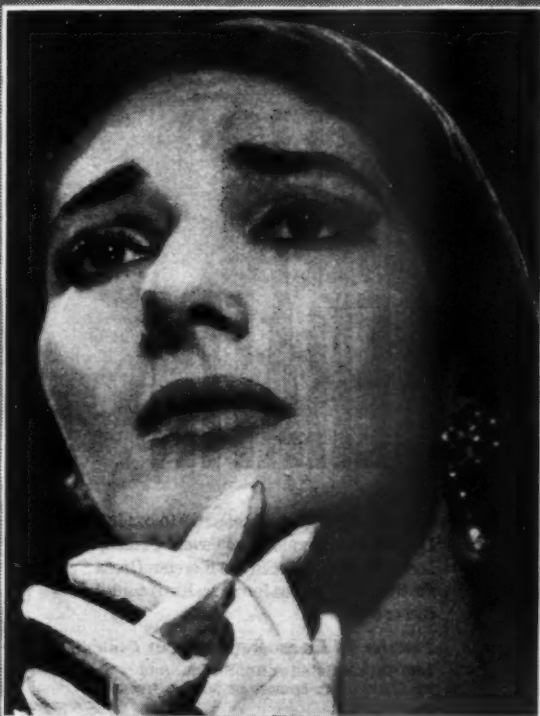
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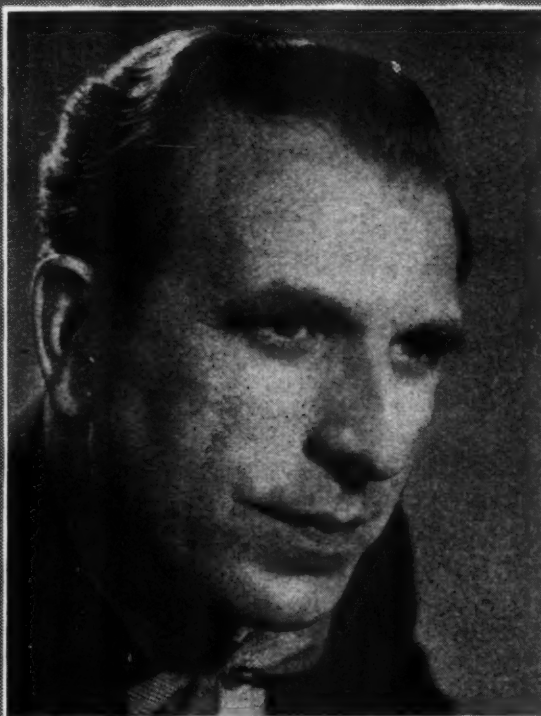
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PHOTO: HAROLD LAWRENCE

The Be-Your-Own-Conductor movement reigns strong among pianists. **Rosalyn Tureck** played the double role in Bach concertos in London, and recently did so with the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra—"I was the first woman to be invited to direct the orchestra in its regular series". In April and May she will do so with the Scottish National Orchestra, and she hopes to do so soon on records too. Meanwhile, merely as soloist, she sandwiched a week-end of record-

ing in London between two months in South Africa and three in the United States and Canada.

Though American, she has made London her home and has been used to finding her largest audiences in Europe. But I gather that she won a comparable success on her recent tour of America—where formerly, as she put it to me, "I was rather the pianist's pianist and the musician's musician".

NIGHTS AT THE ROUND TABLE

By W. A. CHISLETT

Pride of place among the new stereo releases goes to "Landmarks of a Distinguished Career" played by an unnamed symphony orchestra under **Stokowski** (Capitol LP SP8399). It would be deserving of this for historical and sentimental reasons alone, but it is not unworthy, I think, musically. When reviewing the monophonic issue last September, D.S. dismissed it as "Highly recommended for hi-fi addicts", but I do not quite see eye to eye with him. It certainly is a very fine recording and I do not quarrel with his criticism of the two Sibelius items. Of the other four he gives qualified praise to the two by Debussy but does not mention at all what to me are the two best—Stokowski's own arrangement of the Bach *Toccata and Fugue in D minor* and Strauss's *Blue Danube Waltz*.

The Bach must be one of the best-known and best-selling classical records ever to have been issued. I well remember the excitement that it caused more than thirty years ago, as a recording, a performance and an arrangement. Let memory should add a golden tinge of its own, as it can, I have looked up the review in *THE GRAMOPHONE* of June 1928. It was by K.K., a critic not given to wild or indiscriminate enthusiasms. What he would say about the new issue I do not know, the realism of the recording might well make him speechless, but here are fragments of what he wrote in 1928. "One of the most exciting achievements of the American orchestra. Here we note the enormous advantage of its many rehearsals." "In breadth, depth, variety of resource, unity in variety, colour, grip and power to stir the pulse I know few works in all the realm of music to compare with it. The performance is truly grand. Every organist has his ideal conception of how he would like this arranged for the orchestra, but I do not think any will withhold very high praise indeed to the transcriber and the players. . . . I strongly urge every reader to get this record. It will exhilarate and delight for ever." I am content to endorse K.K.'s views and apply them to the new recording.

The *Blue Danube* is given a lift that is not that of Vienna but attractive in its own right. The two Sibelius titles are *The Swan of Tuonela* and *Finlandia* and the two by Debussy are *Prelude à après midi d'un faune* and the conductor's own arrangement of *Clair de Lune*.

In September I described a mono issue of the Offenbach-Rosenthal *Café Parisienne* music played by the **Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Felix Slatkin** as lively and sparkling. The stereo version is now issued on Capitol LP SP8405 and the difference between the two is that between ordinary sparkling wine and vintage champagne. The sparkle becomes brilliant glitter, and this is surely what this tuneful and entertaining score demands. I note that in America, Capitol have described the record as a "High-Fidelity Showpiece" and this is no exaggeration, in the

best sense, for though the glitter comes from the treble end of the scale this is poised on a fine fat bass in which the pitch of the deepest growlings is distinct.

I was enthusiastic about two other **Hollywood Bowl Orchestra** records when the single channel issues were released in September and November 1957, respectively, and I am even more enthusiastic about their stereo counterparts.

In the first of them—Grofé's *Grand Canyon* and *Mississippi* suites—**Slatkin** is again the conductor (Capitol LP SP8347). There is quite considerable positioning effect and the benefits of the stereo quality of sound is noticeable throughout the whole range of instruments but particularly in the higher registers of the fiddles (note, for instance, the ethereal quality of the soaring strings in "Cloudburst" from *Grand Canyon* with which the second side opens). The second record is called "Gypsy" and the conductor this time is **Carmen Dragon** (SP8342). The highly sophisticated arrangements lend themselves to the effective demonstration of the new sound quality, but its benefits are heard also where any improvement upon the mono version is perhaps less expected. While this record is not virtuosity for its own sake, the brilliance of both arrangements and playing are outstanding features. As such it is not a record for playing too often, so far as I am concerned at any rate, but when one is in the right mood I know of nothing more effective or more enjoyable. The titles include *Slavonic Dances Nos. 8 and 10* and *Songs my Mother taught me*, all by Dvořák, *Hungarian Dance No. 6* by Brahms, Sarasate's *Zigeunerweisen*, *Hora Staccato* and the two Russian folk tunes *Two Guitars* and *Dark Eyes*.

In June last I rejoiced over the issue of some real military band music by the **Grenadier Guards' Band** under **Major F. J. Harris** and called "An Album of Military Band Music". The superiority of the new stereo issue is apparent from the very opening bars of Holst's *Suite in E flat*, through two movements from Rosse's *Merchant of Venice Suite* and Ansell's *Three Irish Pictures* right to the end of Arthur Wood's little Yorkshire poems, *Three Dale Dances* (Decca LP SKL4041). It is a fine recording of a fine performance.

Coming now to monos, "Operettes—Musette" by **Emil Prud'homme et son Ensemble** is an attractive selection of bits from the operettas of Louis Ganne, Christiné, Lecoq, Lehár, Strauss, Romberg, Bénatzky, Yvain and others grouped into two bands of step-marches and one each of waltzes, tangos, sambas, foxtrots, javes and boleros and played by a little band led by a musette accordion. The atmosphere of a French café is well simulated, complete with backchat by both members of the band and customers (Parlo. PMC1061).

"The Music of Poland" is another Parlophone "Music of the World" LP (PMC1055). Here the dances are mostly mazurkas, polonaises

and polkas and they are interspersed with some quite charming love songs. Here too is all the evidence of authenticity. The singers are of both sexes and strings form the basis of the orchestra. A couple of the dances have quite a Scottish flavour, with whoops and all, and the Polish version of a tango *To Tango leśdla, Mole maki* ("This Tango is for my Mother,") has quite distinctive features.

H.M.V. take us still further afield in "Carnavalitos de Argentina" which features **Edmundo P. Zaldivar and his Orchestra** (CLP1207). Other orchestras that are included are that of **Aguiles and Esteban Peralta-Davila** from the northern province of La Rioja and the **Achalay Folklorist Orchestra** formed of students attending La Plata University and which has built up a great reputation for its performances of native dance music. This again is the genuine article, not Tin Pan Alley or Charing Cross Road notions of what Argentine native music ought to sound like.

"Great Waltzes from Great Operas" by the **Bamberg Symphony Orchestra** under **Fritz Lehmann** is an agreeable selection taken from Offenbach's *Tales of Hoffmann*, Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*, Gounod's *Faust* and Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier*. The playing is leisurely, spacious and affectionate and the recording is good, although I should have liked a little more bite from the strings and sting from the trombones where this is called for (D.G.G. LP DG17133).

Rudolf Schock is now immensely popular in Germany and elsewhere, on stage and platform and also in films. What is more to the point, he deserves to be. His new record is just titled "Germany's Rudolf Schock" and it is frankly sentimental from beginning to end (H.M.V. LP CLP1206). I personally prefer him in more serious vein, but I know of no-one today who could put over the songs he sings here, with orchestral accompaniments conducted by **Schüchter** and in a few items the **Bielefelder Children's Choir**, as well as he; although he just misses the caressing touch which made Tauber unique in our time in similar, and in some cases the same, songs. Here are the titles: *Lehár's Dein ist mein Ganzes Herz* and *O Mädchen, mein Mädchen, In mir klingt ein Lied* (a setting of Chopin for which I do not much care), *Yradier's La Paloma*, *Jode's Rosemarie*, the Bach-Gounod *Ave Maria*, Strauss's *Da draussen im Duftigen Garten*, *Es muss ein Wunderbares Sein* (Liszt), *Verbotenes Gesang* (better known to us as "Musica Proibita"), *Toselli's Serenade*, *Jode's Rose Weiss, Rose Rot* and Bizet's *Agnus Dei*.

The late **Josef Schmidt** also sings a group of popular songs on Parlo. LP PMD1056. These are of course dubbed from pre-war 78s and I am glad to say that none of those included in the two previously issued EPs is included. This was a fine voice, with a heroic quality in it at its best, and it was sad indeed that it should be cut off so tragically and unnecessarily in a concentration camp in 1942. He returned from six years of triumph to Berlin in 1937, but it was a Berlin he no longer knew. He found himself being avoided and his few friends advised him to leave. He was a Jew. He left, but his luck had deserted him, just when he most needed it. His songs are May's *Heut ist der schönste Tag in meinem Leben* and *Ein Lied geht um die Welt*, Johann Strauss's *Ja, Das alles auf Ehr* and *Simplicius*, Adam's *Freunde, vernehmet die Gesichte*, Denza's *Funiculi-Funicula*, Dellinger's *Komm herab, O Madonna Theresa* and Willner's *Ich bin ein Zigeunerkind*. The dubbing is most successful.

The "Australian Aboriginal Songs and Dances" collected and recorded by Professor A. P. Elkin, the noted anthropologist, are strange in the extreme (H.M.V. LP ALPC5). This must be the most primitive of all music.

The chief ingredient is rhythm, but there is melody and occasionally harmony. The nearest that I have heard to this before is some of the music of West Africa. The wailing chanting, with downward glides, is very similar, but the rhythms are very much less complicated than those of West Africa.

In so far as this music can be identified at all with that of the West, the scale is pentatonic. It is more interesting than attractive but would seem to be well matched to the dancing which Professor Elkin describes as vigorous, precise in rhythm and accent and angular in movement.

"From the Emerald Isle" played by the **Robert Farnon Orchestra** contains a selection of well-loved traditional and other popular tunes of Ireland (Decca LP LK4267). They are very well played and recorded, but I should have preferred the simpler of the tunes to have been in less elaborate arrangements than those in which Mr. Farnon dresses them.

From Ireland to Scotland—"Scottish Splendour" as displayed by the **Regimental Band and Pipes and Drums of the Black Watch** (R.C.A. LP RD27109). The music is shared about equally (but separately banded) between the band and the pipes. That from the former includes Scottish airs and a number of well-known marches, and that from the latter both music for ceremonial occasions and traditional airs with other significances. I wish that the sleeve note had told us something about the significance of some of the pipe music. The record opens with a fanfare for trumpets which sounds unaccountably shrill, but this disappears when band and pipes get going, although throughout I find a moderate amount of top cut to be desirable.

A recording of the Edinburgh Military Tattoo, 1958, crowd sounds and all, comes from Rae, Macintosh and Co. Ltd. of 39 George Street, Edinburgh, who are also to issue some LPs of the folk and traditional music of Scotland and the Islands in a "Scottish Heritage" series, some to be sung in Gaelic. As an outdoor recording this is much more successful than many. Among those taking part are the bands of the **Scots Guards**, the **Black Watch**, the **United States Marine Corps** and the **Junior Leader's Band of the Royal Artillery** with the pipes and drums of the **Scots Guards**, the **Royal Scots Greys**, the **Black Watch**, the **Seaford Highlanders**, the **Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders** and the **Brigade of Gurkhas** (AS101). This is an excellent first issue and promises well for those to follow.

Coming to EPs, **Sir John Barbirolli** and the **Hallé Orchestra**, the soloists in particular, thoroughly enjoy themselves in Suppé's *Beautiful Galathea* and *Morning, Noon and Night in Vienna* overtures (Pye CEC32018). The blend of braggadocio and geniality is first-rate and as the recording is good this record is to be recommended without equivocation. So also is that of **Kostelanetz and his Orchestra** in Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* and "Love walked in" from *The Goldwyn Follies* if you happen to want Kostelanetz's idea of how Gershwin's music ought to sound (Philips NBE11095).

On the other hand I find little to admire or recommend in Vox VIP45660 which contains an odd hotchpotch of five pieces, three of which are played by **Bremen Symphony Orchestra** under **Siegfried Golich** and one each by the **Hessian Radio Symphony Orchestra** under **Otto Matzerath** and the **Cologne Gürzenich Orchestra** under **Otto Ackermann**. The playing is average but no more, as is the recording. The titles are Bach's *Air from Suite No. 3*, Schumann's *Träumerei*, the march from Beethoven's *Ruins of Athens*, the *Rondo alla Turca* from Mozart's piano sonata in A and the storm music from Rossini's *Barber of Seville*.

A dubbing of four songs recorded by the one and only **Marie Lloyd** in 1912 on to H.M.V. 7EG8340 is more successful than I dared hope when I read that it was to be issued. The recording is of course thin and poor by 1959 standards, but somehow she succeeds in projecting her personality through all the technical defects, and there is no mistaking whose voice it is. Marie Lloyd did not make many records and the few that she made are rarities today. This dubbing will delight all who look back on the palmy days of the music hall with nostalgia, and may perhaps even provoke some of the young popular singers of today into wondering whether they have not more to learn than they ever dreamed of.

An E.P. by **Vanessa Lee** very briefly but pleasantly epitomises her career. After trying her hand at many things, but with her heart set on a stage career, she got her chance one night in 1947 when as understudy she had to play the leading role in *The Dancing Years*. Such was her success that Noël Coward took her to Australia as the leading lady in *Perchance to Dream*. Thus she became a star almost overnight. One of her finest roles was in *Kismet*, produced in 1955 and the music of which is borrowed from Borodin. This disc contains "My dearest dear" from the first named, "We'll gather Lilacs" from the second and "Baubles, Bangles and Beads" and "And this is my beloved" from *Kismet* (H.M.V. 7EG8353).

MISCELLANEOUS

AND DANCE By JOHN OAKLAND

An asterisk following a 78 r.p.m. number indicates its availability at 45 r.p.m. The numbers are the same with the addition of the prefix "45". Where the 45 r.p.m. number is different it is given immediately after the 78 r.p.m. number.

The parade of the cha-cha, mostly old tunes dolled up in Latin costume, continues. I admit that some of them are made for this peculiarly enticing rhythm, such as when **Hernando Hopkins**—there's a good Latin-American name—and his **Orchestra** play the *Nôtre Dame Victory March* with plenty of zest on H.M.V. PCP566* though the other side is a case of good ideas, and musicianship wasted—on *Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer* as a cha-cha. On the Parlophone label (R4510*), **Tony Scott's Cha-Cha Band** play *You Go To My Head* quite comfortably and make some obscene popping noises in *Cha-Cha Pop-Pop*, while an American group, **Jerry Murad's Harmonicats**, on Mercury AMT 1013*, feature some very incidental harmonica in a jerky affair called *Honeymoon In Puerto Rico*, but exhibit greater cohesion in the cha-cha version of *Cocktails For Two* on the other side. I think the booby prize must go to **Guy Lombardo** and his **Royal Canadians**, however, for cha-cha-ing *St. Louis Blues* (Cap. CL14978*). This curious mixture of early-'twenties trombone and sax teams (composed by W. G. Handy according to the label) is backed by the cha-cha *Exactly Like You*, and the same applies here.

Poor old *St. Louis Blues*—it does get kicked around. For on an LP by **Tex Beneke** (Camden CDN116) the famous march version reappears, along with a string of other standards like *Bye-Bye Blues*, all done in the near-Miller manner of ten or so years ago, under the generic name *Stardust*. Then on Mercury AMT1015*, **Cozy Cole**, the Negro drummer, has a bash at it, literally, with a small mainstream-type group, backed by *Father Co-operates*, featuring flashy piano and the leader's chugging drumming. Mention just above of **Guy Lombardo** reminds me that his is one of many bands contributing to the success, for such is assured, of *Dancer Craze*, on Cap. LP T927. Others include **Pee Wee Hunt**, **Ray Anthony**, **Plas Johnson**, **Stan Kenton**, **Nelson Riddle** and **Billy May**, so you can see that there is something here for everybody, dancers or listeners, for the dances include the waltz, bop, charleston, calypso and bunny-hug—and no cha-cha! Another good dance record is a Philips EP, BRE12226, with **Ray Conniff** and his **Orchestra** and choir (used, as before, as part of the orchestra) in *Dancing In The Dark*. I think this is more successful than Fontana EP TFE17034, with

Neal Hefti and his **Orchestra** and the **Ray Charles Singers** in *Swinging, Singing Instrumentals* that include *Opus One* and *Mood Indigo*. Now, I have the greatest admiration for the Ray Charles Singers and for Mr. Hefti's arrangements, but a little more of his orchestra would have made for a better balanced programme here.

Les Brown and his **Band of Renown** (Cap. LP T1060) have produced yet another full-length version of the "South Pacific" score, this time for dancing. It is very pleasant and mostly restrained, but it lacks something of the excitement of the Les Baxter set on the same label last year. For dance music, that will appeal to the romantic that is in all of us who love music of any sort, **Eric Jupp** and his **Orchestra** are represented on Col. EP SFG7846 in four numbers from his recent LP, very romantic indeed and well chosen and beautifully played. Titles include *Let Me Call You Sweetheart* and *I Love You Truly*.

One of the more tuneful of the current hits is *The Day The Rains Came*, of which I have two new versions. Although **Georges Jouvin** is perhaps more musically on his trumpet—a sort of French Eddie Calvert—than his opposite number in **Claude Luter's** **Orchestra**, his H.M.V. (POP565*) is much less feebly played, albeit with excellent vibraphone accompaniment amongst other things, than Luter's on Vogue V9132*. Luter, long a disciple of the great Sidney Bechet, plays a clarinet that echoes the New Orleans veteran, but it was a mistake to start the disc with that monotonous ringing piano, even if that did underline the title. The reverse side of the Luter is *La Grande Coco*, a carnival parade number that could have qualified it for Mr. Oliver King's column; the backing to M. Jouvin's trumpet cavorting is *History Of Love*, which he tosses off without another thought.

Mantovani has two new discs, an EP (Decca DFE6542) and a single (F11003*), the EP including *Come prima*; the love theme from the film "Houseboat", the theme from "A Certain Smile" and the wistful *Only Yesterday*, on each of which all the mighty Mantovani resources are brought intelligently to bear, with the usual ultra-sweet effect, and the single has the theme from "Separate Tables" (during which **Anthony Oliver** declaims the lyrics with melodramatic intensity) and the old waltz *Fascination*. The opening of this is out of tune, due I think, to tape-fluctuation, but it clears up gradually. The same tried and trusted waltz is among those played by the

famous Blackpool Tower organist **Reginald Dixon** in a set called *Memories Of The Tower* (Col. EP SEG7849). Others include *Whispering* and *Avalon*, both nearly forty years old! Mr. Dixon has two other EPs that have just been sent to me: Col. SEG7835, on which he explores the score of "Gigi", and SEG7859, in which he hands a well-made bouquet to Irving Berlin. All these make up a real feast for pipe-organ lovers.

I have mentioned before that I am no great lover of the cinema type organ, but I much prefer it to the eldritch noises, ghost howls and near-wolf-whistles that constitute much of *Music From Outer Space* as imagined by **Russ Garcia** and his Orchestra on London LP HAU2141. The science of electronics has been co-opted to produce this, but it is not nearly as light-hearted or as enjoyable as the similar space-tour by Ron Goodwin on Parlophone a few months ago. Personally, I prefer to stay well and truly on earth, musically and every other way. I would enjoy, for example, a tour of the North American continent as envisaged for me by **Philip Green** and his Concert Orchestra on Col. LP 33SX1121. Some of this is exciting, all of it entertaining music, arranged with taste and care.

Philips, never a firm to issue records on anything but a grand scale, have produced three LPs, one each devoted to the music of George Gershwin (BBL7267), Cole Porter (BBL7269) and Richard Rodgers (BBL7270). The orchestras playing these are directed by **Percy Faith**, **Michel Legrand** and **André Kostelanetz** respectively. It's a matter of taste, like all such things, but I prefer the Faith record for its aptness in presentation. The Legrand is rather too obviously Continental, with musette accordions and wordless angel-choirs and the Kostelanetz rather too plushy for the scintillating music it perpetuates. Before leaving the instrumental discs I must recommend one on Pye N25009*. **Reg Owen** and his Orchestra play *Manhattan Spiritual* and *Ritual Blues* with interesting tone-colouring; the effect at the opening of the first side is like that of an organ, a fine example of modern orchestration.

I don't recall a month when so many records arrived bearing revivals of old numbers. It seems de rigueur for an LP to include *The Very Thought Of You*, and indeed **Nat "King" Cole** has one entitled thus on Cap. LCT6173; naturally, the rest of this artistically-produced set are oldies too. (On Cap. EP EAP1-1138, he sings *Acercate más* as *Come Closer To Me*, amongst others, and on LP LCT6166, all the songs this versatile coloured artist sings are in Spanish, including *Acercate más*!) There is a single of the Ray Noble classic, too—a slightly immature but quite pleasant rendering by **Rikky Price** on Fontana H171*. Ray Noble is doing well this month, for another of his fine numbers is featured by **Frankie Vaughan** on Philips PB895—*Love Is The Sweetest Thing*, which, with *That's My Doll*, is included in Mr. Vaughan's new film, "The Lady Is A Square". Both seem to suit the varied aspects of this artist's personality. *Carolina In The Morning*, dated 1922, receives a fine modern chorus treatment from **Mitch Miller's** chorus on Philips PB893*, but I feel they are wasted on the children's marching song from "The Inn Of The Sixth Happiness". Two years after *Carolina* someone in a flash of inspiration set down on paper the sparkling lyrics that posed a burning question for a thoughtful society—*Does Your Cheesing-Cum Lose Its Flavour On The Bedpost Overnight?* Whatever the answer, the sales of that commodity do not appear to have been deeply affected either way; but here on Nixa, 35 years after, we have **Lonnie Donegan** and (yes) his Skiffle Group still posing the same question (N15181*). The reverse side is also

of an excursion into the past—only this is of 1957, when "skiffle" was the Thing. Title is *Aunt Rhody*, and I think most of the faithful skiffle fans will not be disappointed; it has "folk" stamped all over it.

Two years later still, in 1926, the team of Bud de Sylva, Lew Brown and Ray Henderson composed *Lucky Day* for George White's famous Scandals show of that year. Now, on Nixa N15182*, **Petula Clark** fairly romps through it in ninety seconds dead. Yet I remember, not all that long ago, when a single disc would last at least three full minutes each side—and it was cheaper to buy, too. Ah well...

Marie Adams of the rough negro voice delves back to 1916 for her latest recording (Cap. CL14963*), presenting *What Do You Want To Make Those Eyes At Me For?* in more or less modern style, and a new Fontana LP (TFL5037) offers genuine original recordings, ranging in date from **Jimmie Durante's** 1929 performance of *Can Broadway Do Without Me?* to **Eddie Cantor's** 1940 song, *Little Curly Hair*.

THE MONTH'S CHOICE

Philip Green Orch.	Col. 33SX1121
Percy Faith Orch.	Philips BBL7267
Reg Owen Orch.	Pye N25009
Four Preps.	Cap. T1090
Harry Belafonte	R.C.A. 1103
Sue Raney	Cap. CL14980
Jo Stafford	Philips BBL7290
Anne Shelton	Philips BBL7291

Also included in this scrapbook of show business, Broadway brauch, are **Al Jolson**, **Burns and Allen**, **Walter Huston**, **Dick Powell** and **Fred Astaire**. The transfer process from the original records has brightened them up a lot, though some of them show their age more than others. One of the most welcome revivals is Cap. CL14981*, which offers **Waring's Pennsylvanians** in their famous *Dry Bones*, and a song which I prefer sung by **Bing Crosby**, *Way Back Home*; though this is good, it makes better sense as a solo.

Among the other choral records is a piece of fun by the **Four Lads** on Philips PB894*, giving a free plug to the American mail-order firm of Sears and Roebuck in *The Girl On Page 44*, and backing it with *The Mocking Bird*, which echoes a tune from Dvořák's Fifth Symphony. It's some time since we had a record from France's greatest male chorus, **Les Compagnons de la Chanson**, but on Col. EP SEG7829 there are four of their best English numbers, such as the famous *Three Bells* and *The Gally Slave*. These still sound grand after ten years or so.

I have always liked the **Four Preps**. This quartet of American college lads strikes a very happy mean between the deliberately corny rowdy-party stuff of **Don Costa**, **Sid Feller** and **Friends** (in *Music To Break A Lease* on H.M.V. LP CLP1234, such things as *You Are My Sunshine* and *Beautiful Doll*) and the far-out explorations of discordant modern harmony purveyed by the **Four Freshmen** on Cap. LP T1008. (Their presentation of *Old Folks* sounds as if they were all nearly asleep; by the time they were finished, so was I.) But the Four Preps remember *The Things We Did Last Summer* on Cap. LP T1090, and have four quite new numbers for *A Lazy Summer Night* (how nice and warm these make you feel) on Cap. EP EAP1-1139. All are most commendable, old or new.

I listened to the **Earth Boys** (Cap. CL14979*) in *Space Girl* and *Barbara Ann* with increasing distaste as the moronic monologue in the middle

of each unfolded, then turned with relief to the unusual carol-like *Little Drummer Boy* by the **Harry Simeone Chorale** on the new Top Rank label (45-JAR101). The **Junior Chorale** on the other side sing *Die Lorelei* in German, and produce a satisfying big sound in doing so. The **Kingston Trio** on Cap. CL14985* sing of *Sally* (not in our alley, nor the one made famous by Gracie Fields) and *Raspberries, Strawberries*, folksy songs in the **Harry Belafonte** manner. That fine singer has two new songs on R.C.A. 1103*. Although the label says that both are accompanied by an orchestra and names the conductor, all I can hear are harmonica and guitar, maybe two guitars, perhaps a string bass. Anyway, the effect is delightful and the songs charming (*Times Are Getting Hard*, *Boys and The Waiting Game*).

Janice Harper (Cap. CL14977*) and **Sue Raney** (Cap. CL14980*) are two young ladies with appealing, sensuous voices, especially the latter; Miss Harper is coy in *I Was Hoping You'd Ask Me* and wildly and passionately predatory in *I'm Making Love To You*, while Miss Raney curls her voice lingeringly round the lyrics of *Eber*, her own composition, and *The Restless Sea*, which I prefer, even if she did not write it. **Rosemary Clooney** (Philips PB900*) has a busy time with an expression of faith in her man, *Come Rain Or Come Shine*, to a vigorous Latin beat, and *Tonight*, from "West Side Story", is more her style of number. **Peggy Lee** rocks meaningfully along with *My Man*, an attractive record but for the cacophonous ending, and has a juke-box "natural" in *Alright, Okay, You Win* (Cap. CL14984*).

The Girls of the Month are undoubtedly **Jo Stafford** (Philips LP BBL7290) and **Anne Shelton** (Philips LP BBL7291). Both these fine mature voices are heard to impeccable advantage in sets of songs that suit them perfectly; they are mistresses of their craft and they never let the public down. Close runner-up is **Judy Garland** with a sentimental set on Cap. LP T1036, sweet and tender as young love should be. Their male counterpart is hardly the stentorian-voiced **Mario Lanza**, but this ringing tenor is heard in more suitable numbers on R.C.A. LP RB16085 (*Begin The Beguine*, *Long Ago And Far Away* and so on) than in many operatic excerpts I've heard.

A new girl singer from Ireland, **Eileen Donaghy**, sings rather samey waltzes and ballads of that country in a mellow voice on Fontana LP TFL5045, though some of her brogue obscures her diction. As a contrast, the piercing brittleness of *Tropicana Holiday*, from Las Vegas (Cap. LP T1048) presented by **Gordon Jenkins** may please more sophisticated listeners. I enjoyed it, too; the *Sex* number is very nicely naughty. Another good-fun record is *A Little Learnin' Is A Dangerous Thing* by **Pearl Bailey** and **Frank Sinatra** on Fontana EP TFE17028, backed by two rather more ordinary early Sinatras accompanied by **Harry James** and his Orchestra. These haven't worn the years so well as the amusing act on the top side.

But if it's laughter you're after, American style, **Stan Freberg** is very much on hand to give it to you—provided you can follow the trend of the various sketches he takes part in. It wants some listening to, as the whole set occupies four 12-inch LP sides, about 1½ to 2 hours' listening, but if anyone has that much time and money and understanding of native American humour, it is rewarding (Capitol LP LCT6170-1).

For those of more modest means and less time, there is a blistering piece of satire from the same spare-nothing humorist on Cap. EP EAP1-1101. This is *Omaha!* in which recent American musical comedies in general, and *Oklahoma* in particular, are ruthlessly pilloried.

STEREO/MONO POPS

"Bob and Ray throw a Stereo Spectacular" on R.C.A. LP SF5023; half demonstration disc, half entertainment, its specifically stereo quality really does at times approach the spectacular. A visit to Dr. Ahkbar in his mist-enshrouded castle is recounted; interspersed with insecure stairways, receding walls and giant tsetse flies is more human diversion provided by **George Melachrino, Lena Horne, Julie Andrews, Abbe Lane** and others, including a blissful *Second Hungarian Rhapsody* from the **Guckenhheimer Sour Kraut Band** (see "Passing Notes", October, 1958). This disc could be thought first-class entertainment or a first-class bore; it should be heard before a purchase.

Lena Horne appears again, this time with a record to herself, on R.C.A. LP, Stereo SF5019, Mono RD27098; she offers a pressing invitation to "Give the lady what she wants". Yet the pressure of the invitation surely lies more in the singer's personal charms than in the purely musical qualities of her singing, for this lacks ease and relaxation. Instead a wobble somewhat reminiscent of the concert hall manages to lend (as it does in that other place) a feeling of nervous intensity to music not always by any means nervously intense. Here it ranges from *Diamonds are a girl's best friend* through *People will say we're in love to Get out of town*; all of them, I need hardly say, well sung within the style adopted and very well accompanied by the **Lennie Hayton** orchestra (four of these titles are available as a stereo EP, SRC7012).

Harry Belafonte is best known as a gentle singer, romantic but in tune. On R.C.A. LP, Stereo SF5016, Mono RD27095, "Belafonte Sings the Blues", he is shown in a new light: still in tune, but now with a beat and, too, a sense of drama. This last quality, usually calculated to wreck the pops, here fits a strong element of social protest in the music, excused perhaps by the title; if you must sing Billy Holiday's *God Bless the Child*, here is probably how to do it. But, protest apart, there is also some first-class music; a marvellous accompanying unit, in which Don Fagerquist's trumpet-playing continually distinguishes itself, allows *Cotton Fields* a cumulative excitement which makes this track outstanding in a record which is itself among the best (four of these titles, including *Cotton Fields*, are available as a stereo EP, SRC7010).

More and more it becomes apparent that some variety—if continuous listening is in mind—is needed in the makeup of a 12 in. pop LP. Decca Stereo SKL4045, Mono LK4298, for example, "Hollywood Cha Cha Cha"; a first-class **Edmundo Ros** disc in every respect, with arranging, playing, and recording all from the top drawer. But twelve cha-chas in succession? Even variety of tune extending from *Moulin Rouge* to (incredibly!) *As time goes by* cannot prevent the twelfth cha-cha sounding like the eleventh too many. In this misfortune the disc is not by any means alone: on Brunswick LP Stereo STA3006, Mono LAT8277, the **Alfred Newman** orchestra and **Ken Darby Singers** transport us to "The Magic Islands". But once in Hawaii we are not allowed to leave without seeing all the sights; and in the course of ten numbers of the *Ke Kali Nei Au* type the most splendid scoring and playing can seem monotonous.

"Come 'n get it", Decca LP Stereo SKL4020, Mono LK4286, sports a small mountain of potatoes (by courtesy of *Smith's Crisps*) on the front of the sleeve and an idyllic copy of "Daily Orders" on the reverse (06.35 hrs: *Polishing wire of coal compound, B site*). The grooves of the disc are occupied by a concert by the **Cyril Stapleton** orchestra. "Alternative ver-

sions of any songs given in the programme will not be sung": the veto is perhaps necessary, for the programme consists entirely of Reg Owen numbers, beautifully scored and played, based on various Army bugle calls. Immediately following the call concerned the music sounds particularly painful, but enjoying this is a privilege reserved for listeners to the mono version of the disc. For on the stereo version, presumably to save space, the calls—the whole point of the music—have been excised. This is lunacy beyond description.

The roll-call of composers—Bizet, Mozart, Donizetti, Schubert among them—looks as if Decca LP, Stereo SKL4018, Mono LK4283, has strayed into the wrong column. Yet it is the "Immortal Serenades" of these composers that **Frank Chacksfield** here offers; their more easily romantic moments presented in agreeable modern arrangements, mostly by Leon Young. The most improbable contributor is Berlioz; when Mephistopheles went a-wooing it was not to float amorous encouragements on the night air. One of the most welcome contributors is Young himself, with an effective *Serenade to a Mandarin*. Nearly everywhere the playing is first-class. But the Tchaikovsky *Romeo and Juliet* excerpt was close enough to the original to have needed symphonic strings for the style; and it needed, too, some red pencil for that coda, sadly out of context. Another luscious orchestral comes this month from Italy: Vox LP ST-VX25770, "Midnight in Rome". Some deficiency in numbers, however (and here and there in accuracy), separate the strings of the **Gianni Monese** orchestra from the most luscious to be had; and relentlessly overhanging all the music is the playing of **Walter Borelli**, a skilful but determined pianist. This prevents the full magic of a Roman midnight being caught by the disc, in spite of an agreeably Italian choice of music.

"Pop goes the Swingin' Marchin' Band"; but R.C.A. LP, Stereo SF5018, Mono RD27101, heralds no explosion, only the enterprise of American school and college bands in adding the pops to their marching repertoire. **Ray Martin** has now copied the style in the studio, playing in the march style some numbers which newly illuminate it (*Begin the Beguine* goes very well indeed) and some which are merely spoilt by it (surely *Lullaby in Birdland* was an odd choice?). The traditional Dixieland march style is missing—the opportunity was spurned even in *Who's Sorry Now?*—but rather severer tradition is served in a final medley of U.S. College Marches. Elsewhere all is experiment, much of it highly successful, all of it highly entertaining. "The deft Mr. Martin", says the sleeve-note optimistically, "has neatly combined the swinging beats of today's pop orchestras with the traditional zest of woodwinds *afans*, in a style that may well be achieved by the school band in your town". Not in mine it isn't; I wish it were! (four of these titles are available on a stereo EP, SRC7011). M.M.

COLUMBIA CO-STAR RECORDS

Many readers will remember the early records of chamber music in which one part was omitted, and similar records of song accompaniments. Now you and I are invited to speak the missing parts in these records of dramatic scenes. I understand that this is a game that has swept the United States, and it is a good example of what I believe psychologists call identification. We all know those character questionnaires in which we are asked whether at the cinema we imagine ourselves playing the hero. Well, now's your chance! You can play opposite **Fernando Lamas** in scenes from *The King and the Chorus Girl* on Columbia 33SX1128, **George Raft** in *They Drive by*

Night on 33SX1130 (not much action here), **Arlene Dahl** in *Casablanca* (33SX1129) (war-time espionage and not bad) and **Paulette Goddard** in *Peyton Place* on 33SX1133 (sordid rubbish). The records are issued by Columbia and all the above can, I suppose, be recommended to fans of the respective stars. Turning to the stage, there is **Sir Cedric Hardwicke** in bits of *Macbeth* (you are Lady Macbeth), *School for Scanda* (you are Lady Teazle), a bit of *grand guignol* and a delightful extract from *The Drunkard*, in which, if you are a woman, you have the delicious chance to cry "Wretch!" (33SX1131). And here is **Tallulah Bankhead** opposite whom many schoolboys of the twenties would dearly have loved even to stand, giving you the chance to play Jack Worthing to her Lady Bracknell (yes, really!), and to try your hand at Ibsen and Dumas *films* on 33SX1132. From all of this it can be seen that at present this is little more than a bit of fun for the family, provided you don't mind your womenfolk making accusations of harlotry across the parlour, but if this is put on a higher plane, such a series would be useful in schools and for drama training. As it is, the main lesson to be learnt from the accompanying scripts (given away with the records) is how to write dialogue for the films. R.W.

STAGE AND SCREEN

Gigi (Loewe; Lerner). Film soundtrack. (M.G.M. 12 in. LP C770, 25s. 9d. plus 10s. 1d. P.T.)

***Carousel** (Rodgers; Hammerstein II). Film soundtrack. (Capitol 12 in. Stereo LP, SLCT6105, 28s. 6d. plus 11s. 1d. P.T.) Also available as a Mono LP, LCT6105, price as above.

***Cinderella** (Rodgers; Hammerstein II). West End Cast. (Decca 12 in. Stereo LP, SKL4050, 25s. 9d. plus 10s. 1d. P.T.) Also available as a Mono LP, LK4303, price as above.

Chrysanthemum (Stewart; Phillips; Chancellor). West End Cast. (Nixa 12 in. LP, NPL18026, 25s. 9d. plus 10s. 1d. P.T.)

The Big Country (Moross). Soundtrack music. (London 12 in. LP, HA-T2142, 27s. plus 10s. 6d. P.T.)

As a first draft for *My Fair Lady*, *Gigi* would be a creditable piece of work. Unfortunately, both in time and in quality, it's more like a faint carbon copy. This team's current score, recalls not only the theme but also the style of their greatest hit. The highlight of it, Gaston's soliloquy, is closely related to "I've Grown Accustomed to her Face" and Louis Jourdan sounds more than a little like Rex Harrison when he sings it. The refrain of this ("Gigi") is a beautiful one but the other songs are less exciting. Maurice Chevalier has the best of them and Leslie Caron's numbers are as pleasant and tuneful as you would expect. Despite all the evidence to the contrary, this show is not another *Fair Lady*—there is no Stanley Holloway, no rain in Spain and precious little wit. As long as you're prepared for that, you'll enjoy it. The worst thing about the record is the sound quality—it has all the familiar faults of a soundtrack transfer, principally too much top and too much bass. Yet *Carousel* has not suffered at all, either in the original mono recording or the new stereo version. The performance is a fine one and gains a lot from the added clarity and separation as well as more sheer sound at the climaxes. The stereo version is banded and perhaps this explains its only drawback: the first four minutes (no less!) of the *Carousel* Waltz have been omitted.

The English production of *Cinderella* has been marvellously recorded and sounds ten times more exciting here than it does in the theatre. The romantic charm of the American version (reviewed last month) is missing, in its place is the odd music hall mixture of English pantomime. Four numbers have been added to the original score, one by Tommy Steele and three from another R. & H. show, *Me and*

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Juliet. I am surprised to find that I enjoy both records, I didn't expect to find that the new one had so many virtues of its own. Tommy Steele's characterisation is appalling and the inverted snobbery of his accent maddening, but his personality as a singer is overwhelming. If you accept that, the Decca record is the one to have. Yana and Bruce Trent sing well together and the orchestra sounds like a pit band ought to sound. A Parlophone EP by the Peter Knight Orchestra (GEP8721) is not recommended.

It's only fair to say that I walked out of *Chrysanthemum* half way through. The record only confirms my impression that it is among the worst English musicals that I have seen. At the end of the show (I now discover), Pat Kirkwood describes all that has gone before as "asinine frivolity" with "musical interferences". Having been presented with those apt phrases, I should be ungrateful to add more. The recording is rather harsh but it is noticeable (and this is also true of *Cinderella*) that the show has been produced for records which means that the score is presented with form and coherence. Also available is a selection from it sung and played by the composer (Fontana EP TFE17098).

Few film scores are worth preserving on records but the music for *The Big Country* is one of them. As Walton did in *Henry V*, Jerome Moross has written a score which not only underlines the action of the film but can also stand by itself. It succeeds on a record because Moross is not content to provide mere mood music but prefers to develop a group of themes that have a substance of their own. The result is a series of musical episodes which loosely form a suite expressing much of the violence and beauty of "the big country". Of the new records for review this month, this is the one that gives me the most pleasure.

MICHAEL COX.

CONTINENTAL RECORDS

Maurice Chevalier's "Yesterdays" (M.G.M. LP C771) only just qualifies as a Continental record. He gives a short version of *Valentine* in French: the other songs are all in English with a few French phrases thrown in as *sauce piquante*. But no other artist is quite so essentially Continental as the man born in the slums of Montmartre 70 years ago, and no one has more carefully preserved his endearing accent and the suggestion of lighthearted naughtiness which is part of the British public's picture of Gay Paree. The record is all the more welcome for its timeliness. Incredible though it seems, it's just fifty years since he was discovered by Mistinguette and launched, with a new straw hat and cane, on the road to fame; and by a happy coincidence the smiling veteran is having one of the hits of a lifetime in the new American film, "Gigi". (At the pre-view one of his songs, *I'm Glad I'm Not Young Any More*, brought warm, spontaneous applause, and coming from critics that is something to write home about).

The collection on the new M.G.M. long player includes one of his famous songs, *Louise*, from "The Innocents of Paris", and a number of others which went round the world with his Hollywood films—*My Ideal* (from "Playboy of Paris"), the delightful *Living in the Sunlight*, *Loving in the Moonlight* and *You Brought a New Kind of Love To Me* (from "The Big Pond"), in which he played opposite Claudette Colbert, *Mimi and Isn't It Romantic* (from "Love Me Tonight"), with Jeannette MacDonald, and *I Was Lucky* (from "Folies Bergère", with Merle Oberon). Young people will find them, I think, gay and tuneful and a pleasant change

from "beat" stuff; to the middle-aged they will bring back pleasurable memories of the era before jive and social consciousness, when entertainment had only to be entertaining. The oddest thing about the collection, by the way, is that he should have chosen to sing that very American number *Yankee Doodle Dandy*, even though he does alter the *Yankee Doodle* boy's birthday from the fourth of July to le Quatorze Juillet and throw in a topical reference to Marilyn Monroe.

Luis Mariano was born just on the Spanish side of the French border, and for a time studied opera. These influences still colour his work. His successes have been operettas with a Spanish or Mexican background, and his style is sometimes a little too big for his material. "Meet Mariano" (H.M.V. LP CLP1222) is a collection of 14 numbers with quite a wide range of style—from Cole Porter's *C'est magnifique* to *Old Torero*, the sentimental *Allo, c'est un coeur qui vous parle*, the West Indian *La Petite Martiniquaise*, *Johnny Guitare* from a

Hollywood Western, and *Gelsomina*, the theme-song from Fellini's film, *La Strada*. Even if the quality varies, most people will find something to please them.

Lola Flores, the sleeve informs us, "is the supreme, consummate artist. Everywhere she goes, both in Spain and abroad, she holds her audiences in the palm of her expressive hand. Her tour of North and South America in 1953 was an outstanding success, and not even one of that acidulous, hypercritical breed known as 'critics' wrote a single adverse word about her performances". The first time I heard her I did feel a little acidulous, but that was because I was offered sherry at two in the morning. Most of the songs in "The Toast of Spain—Lola Flores" (Oriole, LP MG20029) are, I fancy, the Spanish equivalent of "pop", but she puts them over skilfully and the collection is pleasant entertainment, especially in small doses. It's not her fault if my saturation point, when it comes to Spanish popular songs, is on the low side.

LILIAN DUFF.

JAZZ AND SWING

Reviewed by

CHARLES FOX, ALUN MORGAN AND OLIVER KING

Mose Allison Trio

"Local Color"
Local Color Suite (Carnival: Parchman Farm (V): Crepuscular Air: Mojo Woman: Town/Trouble In Mind: Lost Mind (V): I'll Never Be Free: Don't Ever Say Goodbye: Ain't You A Mess. (Esquire 12 in. LP 32-071—28s. 6d. plus 11s. 11d. P.T.)

Mose Allison's intriguing *Local Color* (or *Colour*) adds further pages to the story of his boyhood in Mississippi, a story first unfolded in the series of impressions entitled *Back Country Suite* (Esquire 32-051). Backed by Addison Farmer on bass and the ever-reliable Nick Stabulas on drums, the pianist paints a series of vignettes and sings very effectively on *Parchman Farm*. As a composer and instrumentalist Mose has combined his talents to the best effect and the resulting set of performances is almost as masterly as the ten-part *Back Country Suite*. *Trouble In Mind* reveals another facet, for here Allison picks up a trumpet and plays the Richard M. Jones blues with sincerity and conviction. I feel that Allison has already achieved more in the field of retrospective contemporary jazz than anyone else and his obvious interest in tradition (as opposed to traditionalism) has given his music an individuality lacking in the work of many of today's jazzmen.

A.M.

Louis Armstrong All Stars

The Mardi Gras March/I Love Jazz (V). (Brunswick 7 in. 45 or 10 in. 78 05772—6s. 7½d.)

The theme from the film "Mardi Gras" provides ideal material for Armstrong's exuberance, and there is a great deal of sincerity in the way he sings *I Love Jazz*. But can anyone honestly find anything in either of these performances as satisfying as the music on the Hot Five and Hot Seven discs of thirty years ago? O.K.

Mickey Ashman and his Band

"Memories Are Made Of This"
Wedding Of The Painted Doll: In The Shade Of The Old Apple Tree/Who Were You With Last Night?: If Those Lips Could Only Speak. (Jazz Collector 7 in. EP JEN1—9s. 9½d. plus 3s. 10d. P.T.)

Mickey Ashman's band follows the same neat, crisp, musically pattern as Chris Barber's; it also wins a warm accolade from me for daring to play four most unusual numbers, tunes that

would not normally seem to be good vehicles for jazz. (Certain other "traditional" bands on both sides of the Atlantic, please copy.) The lads also take them fairly straight, so nobody can say they are too far out. *Wedding Of The Painted Doll* is a bit too straight, perhaps, but it's that sort of tune—an absurdity of the 1920s which here swings very well. The other items are all Edwardian ballads or else date from an even earlier era, but they too fit excellently into the Dixieland idiom.

O.K.

Kenny Baker

"Baker Plays McHugh"
Exactly Like You: Baby: I Must Have That Man: When My Sugar Walks Down The Street/Diga Diga Doo: You're A Sweetheart: How Blue The Night: I Can't Believe That You're In Love With Me. (Pye Jazz Today 10 in. LP NJT517—20s. plus 7s. 10d. P.T.)

Song-writer Jimmy McHugh has been a good friend of jazz and his tunes have formed the basis for countless improvisations since the 1920s. Kenny Baker pays tribute to the composer with this set of eight numbers, all of them frequently played by jazz musicians the world over. On three tracks Kenny receives the support of just his rhythm section (Harry South, Jack Fallon and Lennie Hastings); Bruce Turner is added on *Baby*, flautist Johnny Scott on *Exactly Like You*, and Scott, Ray Premu (bass trumpet) and Danny Moss (tenor sax and bass clarinet) on the remainder. Kenny gives the tunes spirited treatments, playing trumpet in the manner of a brash Billy Butterfield. Johnny Scott proves himself to be an important new jazzman and on the up-tempo tracks Lennie Hastings generates a powerful swing behind the soloists.

A.M.

Chris Barber

Oh! Didn't He Ramble (Chris Barber's New Orleans Jazz Band)/**Whoop It Up: Everybody Loves My Baby** (Chris Barber's Washboard Wonders) (Esquire 7 in. EP EP206—9s. 9½d. plus 3s. 10d. P.T.)

One might almost suspect that whoever selected these tracks for reissue nursed a grudge against Chris Barber's band and sought to ridicule it by dragging these forlorn relics out of their eight-year-old limbo. Every group has its

growing pains, but there was surely no need to remind us of them. Even the recording sounds as lifeless as the band. (I wonder, by the way, why the sleeve says that the Washboard Wonders titles were made on September 31st, 1951? Perhaps the annotator is an advocate of calendar reform, for all the best Septembers have but thirty days.) O.K.

Count Basie

"One O'Clock Jump"
Mutton-Leg: Beaver Junction: Patience And Fortitude (V); I Ain't Got Nobody: I'm Confessin': Little Pony/Stay Cool: These Foolish Things: 'Ay Now! (V); Ain't It The Truth: Ride On (V); One O'Clock Jump.
(Fontana 12 in. LP LTF5046—27s. plus 10s. 64d. P.T.)

By the time my words appear in print quite a few readers of THE GRAMOPHONE will have seen and heard the Count Basie Orchestra in the course of its third tour of Britain. Whether by accident or design, Fontana have chosen to celebrate the occasion by issuing this LP, containing six Basie recordings from the 1940s and six from the 1950s. Only three of the tracks—*Ain't It The Truth*, *Stay Cool* and *Beaver Junction*—have been issued here before. Of the earlier recordings, *Stay Cool* and *Ride On* are easily the most impressive; the former, its theme very like that of *Ja Da*, finds the band swinging robustly, Basie himself playing biting, incisive piano and Illinois Jacquet taking an excellent tenor solo. *Ride On* is handicapped by Earl Warren's singing, but against that must be balanced Buck Clayton's vivacious growl trumpet work and some luxuriant, finely poised tenor playing from Don Byas. Of the other tracks from the 1940s, *Mutton Leg* is taken at a very fast clip and features extrovert tenor solos by Jacquet, while *Ain't It The Truth* is mainly notable for tight ensemble playing. Even Jimmy Rushing fails to lift *Patience And Fortitude* above the commonplace, while 'Ay Now! is completely sabotaged by Henry Nemo's archaic jive talk.

The finest track on the whole record, of course, is *Little Pony*, with its long and inspired tenor solo by Wardell Gray, while another outstanding item is *Beaver Junction*, a rolling theme in which the reed section creates an harmonic texture rather like that found in the Ellington band. The other four tracks, all made by the Count Basie Octet, are much too genteel for enjoyment. Although the group included Clark Terry and Wardell Gray in its personnel, neither of those musicians is heard in more than the odd solo; instead the spotlight is thrown upon the clarinet playing of Buddy De Franco, a brilliant technician but a remarkably un-inventive soloist. Even Basie himself sounds curiously like Carmen Cavallaro towards the beginning of *These Foolish Things*, an exceptionally morphean track. Finally, the LP concludes with what must be the duldest version of *One O'Clock Jump* that Basie has ever recorded.

Charles Edward Smith's sleeve-note would have been more useful had it identified a few of the soloists. The note also refers to "an intriguing trumpet" near the end of *Mutton-Leg*, when all I can hear is Illinois Jacquet squealing on his tenor sax. And the personnel listing errs, incidentally, in showing Serge Chaloff as playing only bass clarinet with the Octet; Chaloff was also responsible for the baritone sax work. C.F.

Bob Brookmeyer Quintet

"The Street Swingers"
Arrowhead: Street Swingers: Hot Buttered Noodling/Musica Du Jour: Raney Day: Jupiter.
(Vogue 12 in. LP LAE12147—27s. 6d. plus 10s. 9d. P.T.)

"The Street Swingers" is a kind of sequel to Brookmeyer's "Traditionalism Revisited" (Vogue LAE12108), although this particular group is less concerned with delving back into the past. A valve-trombone, two guitars, bass and drums seems an unlikely instrumentation at first sight, but the poise and relaxation of the musicians makes for a natural warmth of

expression. Although the conceptions of the two guitarists are similar, their tones differ; Jim Hall's is sharply defined, Jimmy Raney's quite a bit softer. Bob plays trombone on most of the tracks, but his fascinating and unique piano work is heard on *Street Swingers* and *Musica Du Jour*, both Brookmeyer compositions incidentally. As an attempt to obtain an integrated group sound from musicians of similar temperaments, this LP is far superior to any by the Jimmy Giuffre Trio, and readers who enjoyed the highly satisfactory "Traditionalism Revisited" album will certainly approve of "The Street Swingers". A.M.

June Christy

"June's Got Rhythm"
Rock Me To Sleep: Gypsy In My Soul: I'm Glad There Is You: They Can't Take That Away From Me: It Don't Mean A Thing: My One And Only Love/When Lights Are Low: I Can Make You Love Me: Easy Living: Blue Moon: All God's Chillun Got Rhythm.
(Capitol 12 in. LP LT1076—24s. 44d. plus 9s. 4d. P.T.)

June Christy may not figure among the leading singers of her generation, and she even has a tendency to sing flat on occasions; she does, however, possess the ability to project her personality. She also knows how to treat a song in the most sympathetic manner, and her husband, Bob Cooper, has provided her with eleven suitable settings for this jazz-slanted LP. A rhythm section led by pianist Russ Freeman is present throughout, with a four-man front-line added on some of the tracks. The selection includes two songs by the talented Benny Carter (*Rock Me To Sleep* and *When Lights Are Low*) and others which have become familiar through their use as jazz vehicles. Cooper takes some excellent tenor solos and there are additional contributions from Freeman, Frank Rosolino and "George Spelvin" (a *nom-de-disque* for Bud Shank). June impresses me most on the up-tempo numbers; she even introduces a little scat-singing into *It Don't Mean A Thing*. Her technique is not wholly adequate for some of the slow ballads and her version of *My One And Only Love* is inferior to that by Lita Roza on Decca. Nevertheless she sings with obvious sincerity and an understanding of the lyrics, while her strong rhythmic feeling helps her through the remainder of the course. A.M.

Jack Costanzo and his Orchestra

"Bongorama"
Botlbad/G & J Blues.
(Columbia 7 in. EP SEB10103—8s. 6d. plus 3s. 4d. P.T.)

About ten years ago it was fashionable to augment jazz rhythm sections with bongo drummers. It was in that way that Jack Costanzo became a part of the Stan Kenton Orchestra and that he later worked with the King Cole Trio. Bongos, however, tend to give a stilted sound to a conventional piano-bass-drums section, even when the little drums are played by such an expert as Costanzo. But on this record Jack is not featured too prominently and we are left with some fairly straightforward small band performances.

Bill Holman wrote *Botlbad* (harmonically *Sweet Georgia Brown*) and plays tenor sax in a front-line which is completed by Herbie Steward (alto sax) and Rolf Ericson (trumpet). Nobody has much of significance to say. *G & J Blues* (the *G* stands for Gerry Wiggins, who plays piano on both titles) has a melody based on two notes and seems to have been recorded at a club, if we are to judge from the crowd noises. A tenor saxist, listed as "Tom Brown" but sounding very much like Georgie Auld, opens the proceedings and there is a wild, swinging trumpet passage from Johnny Anderson. In between the two solos Herbie Steward can be heard, playing alto in a style reminiscent of both Art Pepper and Benny Carter and raising the entire level of an otherwise mediocre performance. A.M.

Johnny Dankworth Orchestra

"The Vintage Years"
Crazy Rhythm: The Breeze And I: Swinging The Blues: Don't Get Around Much Any More: I Can't Get Started: How Deep Is The Ocean?/How High The Moon: Moonglow: Jive At Five: Stardust: Idaho.
(Parlophone 12 in. LP PMC1078—25s. 9d. plus 10s. 1d. P.T.)

Recorded during March, April and June of last year, the latest Johnny Dankworth LP is made up of "standards" (if *Jive At Five* and *Swinging The Blues* can be included in that category). Without doubt John's present band is one of the best in the world today. Its strength lies in ensemble playing, and although the soloists are consistent and good the total result is greater than the sum of the individual parts. There is an infectious zest about the way the band tackles such extrovert material as *Crazy Rhythm*, the lead trumpet playing of Derrick Abbott giving the brass great power and authority. *Swinging The Blues* is a head arrangement, but the remainder of the scores were written by Dankworth and his staff arranger, Dave Lindup. As a matter of fact Dave's writing sometimes creates the effect of a superior head arrangement; *How High The Moon* is a case in point, the band sounding particularly relaxed and spontaneous.

In the light of his continuing achievements as bandleader, composer and arranger, as well as his role as a leader in movements to promote better inter-racial friendship, it is forgivably easy to overlook the fact that Johnny Dankworth is still the best alto sax soloist in this country, if not in Europe. He is also the strongest performer in his band, as witness his extended solo in Dave Lindup's arrangement of *I Can't Get Started*. Of the remaining musicians, trumpeter Dickie Hawdon and tenor saxist Danny Moss are worthy of special mention, Danny's Hawkins-like playing turning *Stardust* into one of the best tracks. In fact the only weakness I can find in the whole LP is that some of the writing in *Idaho* tends to be a bit contrived and to fall below the standard of the remainder. A.M.

Eddie Davis Trio Plus Joe Newman

Broadway: Don't Blame Me: Marie: A Misty One: Save Your Love For Me/Telegraph: Farouk: Lock-Up: On The Street Of Dreams: Swingin' Till The Girls Come Home.
(Columbia 12 in. LP 33SX1117—25s. 9d. plus 10s. 1d. P.T.)

"Count Basie Presents The Eddie Davis Trio Plus Joe Newman"—that's the full title of this LP, and the Count, in fact, can be heard playing piano on every track. In addition there is "Lockjaw" Davis himself (tenor sax), Shirley Scott (organ), George Duvivier (bass), Butch Ballard (drums) and a guest-artist, trumpeter Joe Newman—six people altogether. Davis, of course, possesses enormous presence, even if his invention cannot equal that of men like Webster, Hawkins or Rollins, and naturally his playing dominates the record. He is featured on two tracks—*Don't Blame Me*, slow and rhapsodic, and the up-tempo *Lock-Up*, on which he uses a much more leathery tone and works himself up to a point where one almost expects him to start squealing.

Joe Newman was in good fettle on this session, taking fine open solos in *Telegraph* and *Farouk* and tightly muted solos on most of the other tracks. Basie, of course, is his usual unadorned self, fashioning sparse little patterns, interpolating single notes, and all the time helping to keep the music swinging. The record would be almost unadulterated delight, in fact, were it not for Shirley Scott, who plays the electric organ in Davis's regular group. I've conquered my inbred distaste for this instrument sufficiently to enjoy the work of Bill Doggett, but Miss Scott I cannot pardon. *Street Of Dreams*, her feature number, is a monstrosity in which she sets her contraption howling,

whistling and tinkling, achieving an effect that comes somewhere in between Moondog in stereo and the dawn chorus on a Sussex hillside. Compare this with the exquisitely simple piano playing of Count Basie and you'll understand why I fume and fret. But if you can endure the lady organist, then there's a lot of good jazz to be discovered on this record. C.F.

Duke Ellington's Spacemen

"The Cosmic Scene"
Avalon: Body And Soul: Bass-ment: Early Autumn: Jones/Perdido: St. Louis Blues: Space-ment: Midnight Sun: Take The 'A' Train.
(Philips 12 in. LP BBL7287—27s. plus 10s. 84d. P.T.)

Duke Ellington employed an unusual instrumentation on this session. A front-line consisting of Clark Terry (trumpet), Jimmy Hamilton (clarinet) and Paul Gonsalves (tenor sax) is backed up by the three trombonists—playing only in concert, never as soloists—and the rhythm section. Jones, that ebullient number which Ellington uses as a background to his monologue on finger-snapping and ear-tilting at the end of his stage shows, has already appeared here on an EP, but the remainder of the tracks are quite new to us.

Most of this music seems a little flimsy by comparison with the kind of thing we have grown to expect from Duke Ellington, but there is an abundance of good solos. Clark Terry, in particular, creates a quantity of witty and lyrical solos, once again confirming my opinion of him as one of the most versatile and individual of present-day trumpet-players. Paul Gonsalves sounds in much better form here than he did at any time during his tour of Britain with the Ellington band, while Jimmy Hamilton (whom I admit I rarely enjoy as a soloist) performs very effectively. Hamilton, as a matter of fact, wrote the arrangements of *Avalon*, *Midnight Sun* and *Early Autumn*, all tasteful if not exactly inspired performances, although the last track is memorable for Clark Terry's sensitive open playing.

Body And Soul, a feature number for Paul Gonsalves, finds the soloist beginning in leisurely style, sounding a little like Ben Webster, before taking three choruses at fast tempo, in which he does little more than run through the changes. *Perdido* becomes a vehicle for Jimmy Hamilton, while *Spacemen*, a new Ellington composition, is designed to show off Clark Terry. Terry is again the dominating soloist in *St. Louis Blues*, otherwise a rather disappointing track, and *Take The 'A' Train*, yet another interpretation by an Ellington group of Billy Strayhorn's tune, and an interpretation which contrives—like most of its predecessors—to sound amazingly fresh and spontaneous. C.F.

Gil Evans And Ten

Remember: Ella Speed: Big Stuff/Nobody's Heart: Just One Of Those Things: If You Could See Me Now: Jambangle.
(Esquire 12 in. LP 32-070—28s. 6d. plus 11s. 14d. P.T.)

During the next couple of decades I hope and expect to see composers and arrangers taking a bigger and more creative role in jazz. Those jazz records which consist of a string of long solos are all very well, provided the soloists are near-geniuses, but they do lack form, a fault that has afflicted jazz ever since the jam session was invented. Duke Ellington has always approached the problem in the right way, composing for performance by particular musicians, the kind of thing that Gil Evans has done (and for which I praised him hugely—see *THE GRAMOPHONE* May 1958) in "Miles Ahead" (Fontana TFL5007), the set of short "concertos" which he scored for Miles Davis. And however much he may be criticised for getting "too far out", Evans persists in writing specifically for jazz musicians. Remember what Gerry Mulligan said: "Gil Evans is the one arranger I've ever played for who can really notate a thing the way a soloist would blow it". And in the final analysis it is in the manner of its performance,

its personal tone and character, rather than in any elements of structure or content that jazz is basically different from Western music in general.

While this new LP is less ambitious than "Miles Ahead", it swings much more freely. Evans recorded it in the autumn of 1957, using a band that contains a fair sprinkling of his colleagues in the old Claude Thornhill orchestra. The group is eleven strong, including a bass-trombone, French horn and bassoon in addition to John Carisi and Jake Koven (trumpets), Jimmy Cleveland (trombone), Steve Lacy (soprano sax), Lee Konitz—masquerading as "Zeke Tolin"—(alto sax), Paul Chambers (bass) and Jo Jones (drums). Evans himself is the pianist, performing in a style that is usually identified as "arranger's piano". The material consists of three "standards", Tadd Dameron's *If You Could See Me Now*, Leonard Bernstein's *Big Stuff*, the New Orleans murder ballad, *Ella Speed*, and *Jambangle*, a Gil Evans "original".

As in "Miles Ahead", the performances are marked by swift changes of tempo, by a subtle mixing of textures, and by intricate and brilliant scoring for the brasses, particularly towards the close of *Just One Of Those Things* and *Ella Speed*. Apart from Steve Lacy, who manages to get well away from the heavy influence of Sidney Bechet, the solo playing is competent rather than distinguished. Jimmy Cleveland, too often the captive of his own technique, manages to perform with more warmth and sensitivity than usual, while Jake Koven, a trumpeter who toured Britain during the war years with "This Is The Army", plays in a style rather like Bunny Berigan's. Lee Konitz, probably because he was contracted elsewhere, is never heard for an instant outside of the ensemble. But it is the orchestral writing that makes this such an exciting and absorbing set of performances. Evans is preoccupied with texture in a way that no other present-day jazz composer or arranger seems to be, and in addition he has brought the art of re-composition, the conversion of an existing theme into something decidedly rich and strange, to a point where his arrangements take on a life and identity of their own. C.F.

Woody Herman and his Orchestra

"Jazz—The Utmost!"
The Preacher: Why You: Blue Satin: Bar Fly Blues: Wallin' In The Woodshed: Roland's Rollin'/Strawberry To The Blues: Try To Forget: Downwind: Ready, Set, Jump: Slightly Groovy: Gene's Strut.
(Columbia 12 in. LP 33CX10129—80s. plus 11s. 84d. P.T.)

"Summer Sequence"
Summer Sequence: Sideways Of Cuba/Caldonia: Lady McGowan's Dream: Back Talk: Everywhere: The Good Earth.
(Fontana 10 in. LP TFR0015—21s. plus 8s. 24d. P.T.)

"Jazz—The Utmost!" is one of those meaningless titles which record companies delight in plastering across LP sleeves. Actually the record presents the Woody Herman band, vintage July 1957, trying hard to live up to the reputations of previous Herds. Apart from Woody and trombonist Bill Harris the orchestra is composed largely of little-known musicians and the bulk of the arrangements are the work of Gene Roland. Roland's writing has improved since his early days with Stan Kenton, but he is not an arranger of great importance or originality. Most of the numbers rely on rather commonplace riffs and other rhythmic devices, which this young band fails to bring to life. Individually there are soloists of promise, particularly among the three tenor saxists—Jimmy Cooke, Bob Newman and Jay Migliori. Bill Harris seems to have changed his style scarcely at all and still rolls out ripe-toned solos with confidence and relaxation; his choppy phrasing is an acquired taste and not to my liking, yet I would not attempt to deny his position in jazz. Herman plays pleasant clarinet solos and better Hodges-style alto, but a snap comparison between the

Columbia and Philips albums reveals the general inferiority of the later band.

The Philips LP comprises reissues of tracks by the First Herd (1945 to 1947) and is one of those amazing compendiums of cross-backings which some companies specialise in producing. *Summer Sequence*, *Lady McGowan's Dream*, *Back Talk* and *Everywhere* were first issued in micro-groove form on the now-deleted Columbia 33S1068, while the remainder are still available on Philips BBL7123. The music, of course, is superb, for these are minor classics, but the haphazard compilation of titles leaves much to be desired. A.M.

Tal Farlow Trio

"The Swinging Guitar of Tal Farlow"
Taking A Chance On Love: Yardbird Suite: You Stepped Out Of A Dream: They Can't Take That Away From Me: Anything Goes/Like Someone In Love: Meteor: I Love You: You Don't Know What Love Is: Chockles.
(Columbia 12 in. LP 33CX10132—80s. plus 11s. 84d. P.T.)

Guitarist Tal Farlow—a musician, incidentally, for whom I have a great deal of admiration—joins forces here with pianist Eddie Costa and bassist Vinnie Burke. The music they produce together, however, is curiously empty and frankly boring, for there is little variation throughout the duration of this long long-player. All the tracks except *You Don't Know What Love Is* are played at about the same tempo—medium to medium-fast. Tal seemingly delights in playing quavers and semiquavers at this pace; many of his solos, in fact, are built almost entirely on displays of agility which unhappily are devoid of memorable ideas. Costa, like Farlow, swings all the time, but he, too, plays in a nervous, brittle-sounding manner. From previous records I know that both Costa and Farlow are good jazz musicians, quite capable of creating solos of considerable merit, but here they seem concerned only to show off their dexterity. In jazz, as in any other art, technique in itself is not enough. A.M.

The Hi-Lo's

"The Hi-Lo's And All That Jazz"
Fascinatin' Rhythm: Small Fry: Something's Comin': Love Locked Out: Lady In Red: Agogically So/Some Minor Changes: Then I'll Be Tired Of You: Mayforth: Moon-Faced, Starry-Eyed: Summer Sketch: Of Thee I Sing.
(Philips 12 in. LP BBL7288—27s. plus 10s. 84d. P.T.)

"We can hardly be categorised as a 'jazz' vocal group", writes Hi-Lo Gene Puerling on the sleeve. I would have substituted "never" in place of "hardly", for any connection between the Hi-Lo's and jazz is coincidental. The group sings as well as ever on this LP, but their attempt to jump aboard the jazz band-wagon was a serious mistake. The supporting group is led by pianist-arranger Marty Paich, who has allowed ample space in the scores for solos from Jack Sheldon, Bob Enevoldsen, Bud Shank (on baritone sax), Herb Geller and Bill Perkins. The vocal group and its instrumental backing both function well, but mixing the two is like putting oil in water. The Hi-Lo's are still mainly concerned with the perfection of their unison singing, and it is probably a weakness on my part that I remain unimpressed by these vocal gymnastics. A.M.

Johnny Hodges and his Orchestra

"Meet Mr. Rabbit!"
You Blew Out The Flame In My Heart: Blue Fantasia/Sideways: Wham.
(Columbia 7 in. EP SEB10105—8s. 6d. plus 3s. 4d. P.T.)

You Blew Out The Flame and *Blue Fantasia* come from one of the first recording sessions made by this band, a group which Johnny Hodges formed after leaving Duke Ellington in 1951. Nelson Williams and Sonny Greer play trumpet and drums respectively, but neither measures up to the standard of Emmett Berry and Joe Marshall, who are present on the remaining pair of titles, recorded a year later. Both Hodges and Williams seem uncertain of

the melody towards the end of *Blue Fantasia* and this results in a general feeling of uneasiness after a very promising beginning. *You Blew Out The Flame*, a tune which deserves to be performed more often, is much better, while *Sideways* bounces along in fine style and *Wham* contains a good tenor solo by Al Sears, often an inconsistent musician. Hodges, of course, is superb throughout, playing like a real craftsman. Ken Palmer's arresting cover photo, taken during the Ellington tour last year, has captured the aloof, detached air which Johnny affects as he pours out a flow of thrilling ideas. A.M.

Billie Holiday

"Lady In Satin"

I'm A Fool To Want You: For Heaven's Sake: You Don't Know What Love Is: I Get Along Without You Very Well: For All We Know: Violets For Your Furs: You've Changed: It's Easy To Remember: But Beautiful: Glad To Be Unhappy: I'll Be Around: The End Of A Love Affair.

(Fontana 12 in. LP TFL5032—27s. plus 10s. 6jd. P.T.)

Just because I have been such a great admirer of Billie Holiday's singing, most of her recent records have saddened me. Not only has her voice, once the supplest of instruments, grown coarse, but her phrasing often seems a matter of habit rather than artistry. On this new LP, however, the first she has made since leaving Norman Granz's roster, although her voice remains tragically ruined, scarcely rising above a croak on some of the tracks, her feeling for the shape and mood of a song survive unimpaired. Once again there is tension within her performance, a manipulation of the melodic line that changes a trivial phrase into something intensely personal and moving. In *You've Changed* and in parts of *But Beautiful*, for instance, Billie conquers all her limitations and achieves a remarkable degree of integration. And these are far from being isolated examples. J. J. Johnson and Urbie Green take trombone solos on a few of the tracks, but for the most part the accompaniment consists of swirling strings and the hushed cooing of a "celestial choir".

It would be an admirable thing if Philips could be induced to issue some of the masterpieces which Billie Holiday recorded just before the war, recordings made either with her own band or with Teddy Wilson's. I am thinking of titles like *Easy Living*, *You Let Me Down*, *A Sailboat In The Moonlight* and *You Go To My Head*, just to name the first few that come to mind. Then some of the younger jazz aficionados will understand why I persist in regarding Billie as the greatest of all the jazz singers. In the meantime, despite all its drawbacks and imperfections, this new LP presents Billie Holiday singing with much more coherence and artistry than she has displayed for quite a while. C.F.

"Jazz Is Busting Out All Over"

Walkin' (Billy Ver Planck Orchestra): Monday Stroll (Frank Wess Quintet): SRAM (Yusef Lateef Quintet): M.C. (Frank Foster Sextet): June Is Busting Out All Over (A. K. Salim Orchestra): Stop (Sonny Redd Quintet): Sugar Dugan (Sahib Shihab Sextet): Jan-Gee Brown (Billy Ver Planck Orchestra): (London 12 in. LP LTZ-C15143—27s. plus 10s. 6jd. P.T.)

"Featuring 37 leading jazzmen", runs the sub-title on the back of the sleeve, a statement that is perhaps a little flattering to a few of the musicians who pop up in this anthology, a gathering of odds and ends from seven different sessions. As it happens the general level of the record is quite high, and apart from Sonny Redd's alto-playing in *Stop*—its very title an obijuration one wishes the soloist had obeyed—there is nothing to upset the most fastidious listener. And even *Stop* is graced by a light, delicate piano solo by Wynton Kelly.

The first and last tracks are performed by a nine-piece band directed by Billy Ver Planck, one-time trombonist and arranger with the Dorsey Brothers, Neal Hefti and Sonny Dunham. Ver Planck's arrangements are not very absorbing, the tracks being more notable for the

fluent alto-playing of Phil Woods and some typically staccato trombone solos from Bill Harris. Frank Wess is heard on flute (rather twee) in *Monday Stroll*, a performance made memorable only by Kenny Burrell's guitar playing, and on tenor saxophone (muscular and fairly inventive) in *June Is Busting Out All Over*, a track that also contains crisp piano work by Hank Jones and a lyrical muted trumpet solo by Joe Wilder. There are touches of Rollins and Stitt, even of Hawkins too, in Yusef Lateef's turbulent, hard-toned tenor playing; Lateef is at his best in *SRAM*, an "original" with more originality than most, which also has excellent flugel-horn work by Wilbur Harden. Frank Foster can be heard cutting lanky, rather brittle patterns in *M.C.*, together with Donald Byrd, who sounds spikier than usual. *Sugar Dugan* contains another fine solo by Phil Woods, but is otherwise rather disappointing.

For anybody who wants an idea of what is happening on the East Coast, I suppose this LP has some value. It should even appeal to people who only want a record to listen to. Tony Hall's sleeve-notes are excellent and identify every one of the soloists. I have already mentioned most of the more worth-while performers to be heard, but I cannot end this review without praising Gus Johnson, who drums admirably on at least half of the tracks. C.F.

Stan Kenton and his Orchestra

"Back To Balboa"

The Big Chase: Rendezvous At Sunset: Speak Low: My Old Flame: Out Of This World/Begin The Beguine: Get Out Of Town: Royal Blue: I Concentrate On You: Beyond The Blue Horizon.

(Capitol 12 in. LP T995—24s. 4jd. plus 9s. 4d. P.T.)

Recorded in January 1958 at the Rendezvous Ballroom, Balboa, the music on this LP is dominated by the personality of arranger Johnny Richards. Richards scored seven of the tracks, none of which is of great merit. In fact some of Richards' writing is frankly dated and harks back to the Kenton "Innovations" orchestra of 1950. The three remaining tracks do more to capture the vitality of the band; Marty Paich's *Big Chase* and Bill Holman's *Royal Blue* will be familiar to any readers who saw and heard the Kenton band in this country during 1956. There are solos of varying quality from Bill Perkins and Richie Kamuca (tenors); Lennie Niehaus (alto); Sam Noto and Lee Katzman (trumpets); and Archie Le Coque (trombone), but the sum total is a mediocre record by even Kenton's own standards. Bill Robinson is listed as playing alto in the personnel, but is credited with the baritone choruses in the solo routine, and there is a trombonist, referred to as "Fitzpatrick" (Bob?), on *Speak Low* who is not listed as being a member of the band. A.M.

Gene Krupa Quartet

"Krupa Rocks"

(The Gang That Sang) Heart Of My Heart: Gone With The Wind: Pick Yourself Up: Fire Place Blues: But Not For Me/Memories Of You: Three Little Words: Avalon: I Only Have Eyes For You: Indiana.

(Columbia 12 in. LP 38CX10133—30s. plus 11s. 8jd. P.T.)

"Krupa Rocks" is the kind of title which could easily mislead the potential customer. Let me say at once that there are no long, exhibitionistic drum solos here; Krupa, in fact, is featured less than any of the other musicians in his quartet. Playing the clarinet is Gail Curtis, one-time member of the Tommy Dorsey and Ray McKinley bands and an obvious admirer of Benny Goodman, while Teddy Napoleon is the pianist, a tasteful performer with some traces of Erroll Garner in his style, and the line-up is completed by bassist Mort Herbert. These days it is not generally considered smart to praise Gene Krupa, and I must admit that on some of his recent records he has—in the name of "showmanship"—plumbed depths of banality. There are no trapeze-acts here, however, and

Gene concentrates on laying down a crisp beat. Any student of drumming can learn much from Krupa's dexterity with sticks on the side drum and certainly it would be a good thing if more of today's leading percussionists could operate their hi-hats with the clean, positive snap heard here. Curtis, Napoleon and Herbert are not really in Krupa's class from a technical point of view, although each man performs adequately and with occasional moments of real inspiration. A.M.

George Lewis New Orleans Ragtime Band

Volume 5

Just A Little While To Stay Here (V)/High Society.

(Esquire 7 in. EP EP209—9s. 9jd. plus 3s. 10d. P.T.)

Originally issued on the 12-inch Esquire LP 20-085, these 1953 recordings of the well-known New Orleans march and spiritual demonstrate just how quavering is Avery Howard's trumpet playing, how limited Jim Robinson's trombone work, how sweet but under-recorded George Lewis's clarinet playing. It also reminds me how bored I am with these tunes which have been flogged over and over again. O.K.

"The Male Blues"

Vol. 1

Talkin' Low Blues: Money Taker Woman (Walter Roland)/Separatin' Blues: Ocean Wide Blues (Georgia Slim).

(Jazz Collector 7 in. EP JEL2—9s. 9jd. plus 3s. 10d. P.T.)

Walter Roland, sometimes erroneously confused with Walter Davis, was something of an itinerant pianist, much in demand during the 1920s as an accompanist on recording sessions in both Chicago and Memphis, while his version of *Fat Mama* is a blues classic. He sings pleasantly enough, but it is his piano playing, compact yet springy, that is most impressive. There are moments, particularly when he reiterates a note again and again, when his work seems reminiscent of Little Brother Montgomery's. The identity of the guitarist heard on these two tracks is unknown, although Alexis Korner has suggested to me that it could easily be Will Weldon.

Georgia Slim, as Colin Pomroy points out in his sleeve-note, sounds (in *Separatin' Blues*, at any rate) curiously like Peetie Wheatstraw, although on *Ocean Wide Blues* he phrases rather as Pink Anderson does. The fact that both tracks were recorded in Birmingham, Alabama, points to the likelihood of Georgia Slim coming from around that area. He is, as it happens, one of the very few blues singers of his generation possessing a deep, baritone voice. And in addition to singing well, Georgia Slim accompanies himself more than adequately on the guitar. C.F.

Brownie McGhee

"Black Country Blues"

Gone, Baby, Gone: Tell Me, Baby: Sittin' Pretty: Bottom Blues: Dissatisfied Blues: Diamond Ring/The Way I Feel: So Much Trouble: When It's Love Time: I'd Love To Love You: Love's A Disease: My Fault.

(London 12 in. LP LTZ-C15144—27s. plus 10s. 6jd. P.T.)

The first four tracks have Brownie McGhee performing as well, perhaps better, than on most of the other recordings by him which are available in this country. He sings warmly and sensitively to the accompaniment of his own guitar (he uses an electric guitar throughout the record, by the way, not only—as the sleeve-note suggests—on the last four tracks) and the wizardly harmonica-playing of Sonny Terry, Brownie's musical partner for over twenty years. But *Dissatisfied Blues*, *Diamond Ring*, *The Way I Feel* and *So Much Trouble*, on which Brownie is backed up by an unidentified and rather indifferent second guitarist, sound far from satisfactory. The first couple of tracks are passable, I suppose, but *The Way I Feel* is immeasurably inferior to Brownie's original version (on American Disc) and *So Much Trouble* is an equally lustless performance. In addition

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the two guitars often clash and even sound out of tune at several points. Last of all come four tracks on which Brownie is accompanied by Sonny Terry and a small rhythm-and-blues group consisting of Ernest Hayes (piano), Mickey Baker (guitar), Leonard Garkin (bass) and Eugene Brooks (drums). Sonny plays well enough (he scarcely ever fails to), but otherwise the singing and instrumental work are rather commonplace.

Each new record by Brownie McGhee seems to contain a number of familiar melodies to which the singer has added new lyrics. This one is no exception, so, with the help of Alexis Korner and his fine collection of blues records, I have identified a few of them. *Sittin' Pretty*, as well as being the tune which Brownie and Sonny sing together under the title, *Climbin' On Top Of The Hill*, has the same melody as Tampa Red's *Crazy With The Blues*, while there are strong similarities between *Gone, Baby, Gone* and St. Louis Jimmy's *Goin' Down Slow* and between *Tell Me Baby and See See Rider*. *Diamond Ring* is another variant of *Betty And Dupree*, while *Love's A Disease* bears a striking resemblance to the phrase which opens the first theme of *Beale Street Blues*. The melody of *Bottom Blues* has been performed by Brownie and Sonny in the past under the titles of *Guitar Highway* and *Those Women Are Killing Me*, just as *Dissatisfied Blues* and *My Fault* are, respectively, *Knockabout Blues* and *Sportin' Life* with new words fitted to them.

C.F.

The Modern Jazz Quartet and The Oscar Peterson Trio

"At The Opera House"

D And E Blues: Now's The Time: 'Round Midnight (The Modern Jazz Quartet)/(Should I: Big Fat Mama: Indiana: Joy Spring: Elevation (The Oscar Peterson Trio).

Last month I commented on the beneficent influence which the Chicago Opera House seemed to exert upon Ella Fitzgerald, J. J. Johnson and Stan Getz when those artists performed there with "Jazz At The Philharmonic". Here is another recording made at one of those concerts, but this time the Opera House seems to have switched off its magic. Not that either the Modern Jazz Quartet or the Oscar Peterson Trio turn in a bad performance (both groups are much too professional for that to happen), but simply that nothing occurs about which a reviewer can summon up very much enthusiasm.

On the face of it the music of the Modern Jazz Quartet represents the antithesis of the frenzy and excitement for which "Jazz At The Philharmonic" is so famous. John Lewis must have sensed that simplicity and directness would be his best policy in these surroundings, and it is noticeable that instead of performing any of their more fanciful works the Quartet sticks to a couple of twelve-bar blues and Thelonious Monk's *'Round Midnight*. This is tasteful, musically playing, less complex than most of the music one associates with this group, with Milt Jackson swinging as limply as ever and characteristically spare and gaunt piano work contributed by John Lewis.

Oscar Peterson recently suffered a critical blast from Miles Davis. In an interview which appeared in the December issue of "The Jazz Review", a new American magazine, the trumpet-player even suggested that Peterson had been forced "to learn how to play the blues". But his chief complaint was one that has already been made by several jazz critics in this country, namely that Peterson plays everything with the same degree of force—both physical and emotional, leaving the other members of his group very little to do in between their solos and preventing any sense of drama or dynamics from creeping into the music. This fault emerges once again on this LP, Peterson rushing in his gay, eclectic way through a set of mostly fast numbers with breathtaking ease. Clifford

Brown's *Joy Spring* is the most satisfying track, taken at a slower pace and played with more sensitivity than Peterson usually musters, but the tearaway style can be heard at its purest and most unrelenting in *Indiana* and *Elevation*.

C.F.

The Montgomery Brothers Plus Five Others

Sound Carrier: Lois Ann: Bud's Beaux Arts/Bock To Bock: All The Things You Are: Billie's Bounce. (Vogue 12 in. LP LAE12137—27s. 6d. plus 10s. 9d. P.T.)

It was on a sunny afternoon last June, when I was sitting in the Soho flat of Danny Halperin, that I first heard this record. "Listen to the guitarist", Danny ordered, and I listened. He was talking, of course, about Wes Montgomery, one of the three Montgomery brothers who can be heard on this LP. So excited was I by Wes Montgomery's playing that, eager to be first with the news, I sneaked a few eulogistic words into the August issue of *THE GRAMOPHONE*, sandwiching them, quite irrelevantly, inside a review of Bob Brookmeyer. Since then I've found no reason to change my opinion. Wes Montgomery still strikes me as potentially the finest jazz guitarist to emerge since the death of Charlie Christian. His technique is far from perfect, but—and this seems much more important—his ideas are fresh and exciting. Jazz guitar playing, it seems fair enough to say, has been in the doldrums ever since the 1940s. The scene only really began to brighten about a couple of years ago, when Jim Hall appeared, and now Wes Montgomery has joined him. Both men are guitarists whose solos cut really audacious patterns, who are not content just to rip out a string of semiquavers. Traces of Django Reinhardt, of Teddy Bunn, of Charlie Christian, even—although not so obviously on this record—of Albert Casey, can be discovered in Montgomery's playing, but these separate influences have become reconciled within a quite individual and remarkably resilient style. The guitar solos in *Bock To Bock* and *Billie's Bounce* are the work of a musician who is really creating and not just rehashing his own clichés.

The two other Montgomery brothers have already appeared on records as half of The Mastersounds. Buddy is an elegant if not particularly original vibes-player, heard at his best in *All The Things You Are*, while Monk plays a fender bass (it looks rather like an electric guitar) and spent five years in the Lionel Hampton band. As for the "Five Others", they are five completely unknown but quite promising musicians from Indianapolis, the city in which the Montgomery brothers themselves were working until a short time ago. The two tenor-players, one sounding rather like Rollins, the other a bit like Lester, are "Punchy" Atkinson and "Pookie" Johnson, although which is which neither I nor the man who wrote the sleeve-note seems to know. The group is completed by a good pianist, Joe Bradley, a trumpet-player, Freddie Hubbard (the weakest musician on the session) and a drummer, Paul Parker. Four of the tracks consist of slightly familiar "originals" by Buddy Montgomery, of which only *Bock To Bock* stimulates really satisfying jazz. The best music, in fact, can be found almost exclusively on the second side of the LP. Not everybody plays well all the time, but the jazz is good enough and distinctive enough to make the record worth hearing. And above all there is that delectable guitar-playing to be pondered and enjoyed.

C.F.

Gerry Mulligan

"Gerry Mulligan Songbook Vol. 1"

Four And One Moore: Crazy Day: Turnstile/Sextet: Disc Jockey Jump: Venus De Milo: Revelation. (Vogue 12 in. LP LAE12128—27s. 6d. plus 10s. 9d. P.T.)

All but one of these Mulligan compositions were arranged by Bill Holman; that odd one—

Crazy Day—was scored by Gerry himself especially for the session. The five-man front-line is capitalised as THE Sax Section on the sleeve, justifiably so in the light of its personnel: Mulligan (baritone), Al Cohn (tenor and baritone), Zoot Sims and Allen Eager (both doubling on alto and tenor) and Lee Konitz (alto). Apart from Mulligan, whose solo playing never fails to impress me, Zoot Sims is outstanding on alto and Eager, although not at the peak of his form, plays well enough to indicate why he is something of a living legend. Holman's writing captures the essence of Mulligan's compositions with accuracy and the five saxophonists slide through their solos in exemplary fashion. The sole error seems to have been the inclusion of Freddie Green on guitar. Freddie is a rhythmic fountainhead in the Basie band, but his steady four-in-a-bar chording here is at variance with the fluid, shifting accents employed by the reed soloists. At times front-line and rhythm section appear to be heading in two different directions. Although Mulligan and Green acknowledge the same roots and traditions, it does not necessarily follow that their work is entirely complementary. This criticism apart, however, the Mulligan Songbook is well worth hearing for the stimulating solos and interplay provided by an outstanding front-line.

A.M.

Turk Murphy

"Music For Losers"

Coal Cart Blues: Chimes Blues/Gettysburg March: Runnin' Wild.

(Columbia 7 in. EP SEB10098—8s. 6d. plus 3s. 4d. P.T.)

Yes, they certainly sound like losers! Was there ever a more apt, if unfortunate, title for an EP? Seldom can *Gettysburg March* have been played so listlessly, or *Runnin' Wild* been taken at so desperate a tempo. In any case a deadpan banjo just about kills anything this track might have had. The two blues on the first side are a little deeper, despite trumpeter Don Kinch's faulty pitching and the messy routine of *Chimes Blues*. Why no dividing scroll, I wonder?

O.K.

Santo Pecora's Dixieland Jazz Band

"On Canal Street"

Rose Of The Rio Grande: Basin Street Blues Twelfth Street Rag: Canal Street Stomp.

(Columbia 7 in. EP SEB10104—8s. 6d. plus 3s. 4d. P.T.)

Apart from the broad, singing tone that Santo Pecora always gets out of a trombone, there isn't much on this EP that our local bands can't supply just as easily. The late George Girard was a wooden-toned trumpet-player, while Pete Fountain's clarinet work has neither fire nor attack and *Rose Of The Rio Grande* is marred by a meaningless exhibition of solo drumming. Strangely enough, the best track is *Twelfth Street Rag*, which possesses a good deal more cohesion than any of the others, most of which are rather vulgar.

O.K.

André Previn—Russ Freeman

"Double Play!"

Take Me Out To The Ball Game: Who's On First?: Called On Account Of Rain: In The Cellar Blues: Batter Up/Double Play: Safe At Home: Fungo: Strike Out The Band.

(Vogue 12 in. LP LAC12142—27s. 6d. plus 10s. 9d. P.T.)

The idea of keyboard duets is not new to jazz. The boogie pianists frequently indulged in them, but it is unusual to find two modern pianists pairing off in this way. Actually Freeman and Previn, supported solely by Shelly Manne's sympathetic drumming, make an ideal partnership, for they both play in a brittle, percussive and angular fashion. In fact, were it not for Lester Koenig's detailed notes it would be impossible to identify just who plays where with any degree of certainty. That neither pianist gets in the way of the other is some measure of their empathy, and although the opening and closing choruses were prearranged, the major part of each performance is improvised. *Fungo*,

a twelve-bar by Freeman, is a good track to play as a sample; both pianists swing all the time and Shelly Manne emulates a bass player by using his drum pedal with extreme caution. Taken in small quantities this two-piano music is stimulating and different, but my interest began to flag when I played through the entire forty-one minutes at one sitting. A.M.

Arnold Ross Sextet

All The Things You Are: These Foolish Things/Once In A While: The Champ.
(Esquire 7 in. EP EP207—9s. 9d. plus 3s. 10d. P.T.)

British jazz has grown up quite a bit in the six years since these tracks were recorded in Stockholm. Arnold Ross was over in Europe at the time, acting as accompanist to Lena Horne, and he made the recordings in the company of Jimmy Deuchar, Derek Humble, Ronnie Scott, Sammy Stokes and Jack Parnell. Now Ross can be an excellent pianist, and he plays nimbly enough in *All The Things You Are* and *The Champ*, but his work on *These Foolish Things* is too close to the Shearing formula and he is equally undistinguished in *Once In A While*. Of the Britons on the session, Derek Humble plays a pleasant alto solo (cast very much in the Konitz pattern) in *These Foolish Things*, Jimmy Deuchar contrives to be tasteful but non-committal on most tracks, and Ronnie Scott (then passing through his Stan Getz period) only really gets going in *The Champ*. The arrangement of *All The Things You Are* sounds far too fussy and elaborate, while the rhythm section—rather leaden-footed at the best of times—becomes positively funeral during *Once In A While*. To be quite fair, however, the poor quality of the recording probably accounts for some of the soggy. C.F.

"Sittin' In"

Dizzy Atmosphere: Ballad Medley—I'm Through With Love (Stan Getz), Without A Word of Warning (Paul Gonsalves), Sweet Lorraine (Dizzy Gillespie), Love Walked In (Wynton Kelly), September Song (Coleman Hawkins)/Ballad Medley—On The Alamo (Dizzy Gillespie), Stompin' At The Savoy (Coleman Hawkins), This Time The Dream's On Me (Wynton Kelly), Time After Time (Stan Getz), Gone With The Wind (Paul Gonsalves): The Way You Look Tonight. (Columbia 12 in. LP 33CX10136—30s. plus 11s. 8d. P.T.)

All the music on this LP was recorded between 6 a.m. and 11 a.m. on the morning of June 30th, 1957, a surprisingly early—or late—time for such a session to take place. But that doesn't seem to have inhibited any of the participants, particularly the three tenor players, Coleman Hawkins, Paul Gonsalves and Stan Getz, who were recording together for the first time. Dizzy Gillespie played trumpet and the rhythm section consisted of Wynton Kelly, Wendell Marshall and J. C. Heard.

Dizzy Atmosphere and *The Way You Look Tonight* race along at very fast tempos and are the weakest performances. Gonsalves and Hawkins both try too hard, the former sounding particularly uninspired, but Stan Getz keeps his head and contributes a shapely, well-proportioned solo to the first track and a blustering yet firmly controlled set of choruses to *The Way You Look Tonight*. The latter track is also memorable for some superb trumpet work by Dizzy Gillespie, bold in design and beautifully flighted. On both these tracks J. C. Heard drums rather erratically, but Wendell Marshall's bass-playing is a source of strength.

The ballad medleys (the first one slow, the second faster) find the tenor players in much better form. Hawkins is especially brilliant in *Stompin' At The Savoy*, improvising in a dramatic and audacious fashion, while Gonsalves, although sometimes gushing a little too much, turns in a good solo on *Without A Word Of Warning*. Pale-toned, reflective and very eloquent, Stan Getz winds his way through *I'm Through With Love* and *Time After Time*, while Wynton Kelly is disappointing in *Love Walked In*,

but skims along lightly and easily in *This Time The Dream's On Me*. Dizzy, muted and incisive, plays capably on both his numbers, but never sound particularly inspired. C.F.

"Solo Flight"

I Can't Give You Anything But Love (Art Pepper): In A Sentimental Mood (James Clay): Too Marvelous For Words (Lee Konitz with Gerry Mulligan Quartet): Angel Eyes (Bill Perkins): If I Should Lose You (Richie Kamuca)/I Can't Get Started (Chet Baker): Isn't It Romantic (Bob Brookmeyer): It's A New World (Bud Shank and Russ Freeman): It's Only A Paper Moon (Phil Urso): September In The Rain (Harry Edison).
(Vogue 12 in. LP LAE12106—27s. 6d. plus 10s. 9d. P.T.)

As its title suggests, this LP is devoted to a set of performances by individual soloists, all of them familiar figures on the West Coast jazz scene. Only two of the tracks—those by Lee Konitz and Harry Edison—have been issued over here before, but as it happens those are among the best. Konitz is scarcely recognisable as the inept performer who visited Britain last year with "Jazz From Carnegie Hall"; here his ideas build up fluently and imaginatively, his solo fitting very snugly into the background supplied by the Gerry Mulligan Quartet. Harry Edison's performance consists of three choruses clipped out of his longer version of *September In The Rain* (on Vogue LDE118), with a theme statement tacked on at each end. Although this sounds gruesome in print, it works out fairly satisfactorily on the record and the result still ranks as one of Edison's most logically constructed solos.

The finest track on the whole LP, however, is Art Pepper's version of *I Can't Give You Anything But Love*, made in the summer of 1956, soon after the alto-player returned to the jazz scene. Nothing else here quite equals Pepper's eloquent, almost passionate, performance. *Isn't It Romantic?* is treated warmly, cosily, but quite inventively by Bob Brookmeyer, while another track that sounds nearly as good is Bill Perkins' *Angel Eyes*, his tenor-playing relaxed but far from indolent. As for the remaining tracks, most of them contain something that is of interest. James Clay could almost be mistaken for Sonny Rollins, but neither he nor the other two tenor-players, Phil Urso and Richie Kamuca, have anything very original or exciting to say. I suppose *I Can't Get Started* is a reasonably competent example of Chet Baker's playing, but it strikes me as remarkably lifeless. *It's A New World*, the only duet on the record, is devoted to rather sombre piano playing by Russ Freeman and some melancholy fluting from Bud Shank, and scarcely does justice to either musician. C.F.

Sarah Vaughan

"After Hours At The London House"
Like Someone In Love: Detour Ahead: Three Little Words: I'll String Along With You/You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To: Speak Low: All Of You: Thanks For The Memory.
(Mercury 12 in. LP MMC14001—25s. 9d. plus 10s. 1d. P.T.)

At her best—and she certainly seems to have reached her peak during the past couple of years—Sarah Vaughan can out-sing anybody in jazz, even including the blissful Ella. Up to now the best example of her present-day work has been "Sarah Vaughan at Mister Kelly's" (Mercury MPL6542, reviewed last September), an on-the-job recording; this new LP fails to keep up quite the same high standard, but it does contain a set of very lively performances, again recorded in front of an audience, although this time at a rival Chicago night club, The London House. Four Count Basie sidemen were on the stand—Thad Jones, Wendell Culley, Henry Coker and Frank Wess—in addition to Ronnell Bright (piano), Richard Davis (bass) and Roy Haynes (drums), but this array of talent seems to have been rather squandered, for all that one hears is an occasional solo or obligato passage. There are a few

memorable instrumental sequences, however, notably Thad Jones's trumpet work in *All Of You* and *Three Little Words*, Wendell Culley's plaintive chorus in *Thanks For The Memory* and Frank Wess's solos on *Like Someone In Love* and *I'll String Along With You*. Sarah herself sings much better on the second side than on the first, sounding particularly good in the slow, sensitive *Speak Low*, turning in a dynamic version of *All Of You*—in which she makes brilliant use of the occasional asperity and the cunningly flattened note, and finishing up with a rather chaotic *Thanks For The Memory*, which finds her struggling with the lyrics in the very first stanza. C.F.

Leroy Vinnegar Sextet

"Leroy Walks"
Walk On: Would You Like To Take A Walk?: On The Sunny Side Of The Street/Walkin' My Baby Back Home: I'll Walk Alone: Walkin' By The River.
(Vogue 12 in. LP LAC12136—27s. 6d. plus 10s. 9d. P.T.)

Leroy Vinnegar is one of today's leading exponents of the "walking" bass, i.e. a steady four-crotchets-to-the-bar succession of notes as opposed to the style of, say, Paul Chambers, who appears to be playing a running solo by way of accompaniment. The full group heard on most of these tracks comprises Gerald Wilson (trumpet), Teddy Edwards (tenor sax), the late Carl Perkins (piano), Vic Feldman (vibes), Tony Bazley (drums) and Leroy Vinnegar himself on bass. Wilson is frankly disappointing in the light of his known ability as a soloist, but Edwards plays extremely well. The rhythm section could hardly fail to swing, while Perkins' piano work reminds us once again what a blow jazz suffered from his death just over a year ago. Vinnegar lays down a firm accompaniment to all the solos, emerging frequently to take choruses which are invariably characterised by a little tumbling figure that has almost become a hallmark of his work. *Would You Like To Take A Walk?*, played by vibes and rhythm section, is a delightful performance, with Feldman and Perkins taking extremely good solos. We should be proud of the way Feldman has moved into the limited circle of leading jazzmen in America since his departure from this country in October 1955. Apart from playing an important solo role on this LP, he arranged *On The Sunny Side Of The Street*, *Walkin' My Baby Back Home* and *Walkin' By The River*. A.M.

IN BRIEF

Gary Crosby. *Please Send Me Someone To Love: One For My Baby: The Nearness Of You: I Gotta Right To Sing The Blues: Exactly Like You/Skyark: If I Could Be With You: There's No You: Blue Prelude: Love Is Just Around The Corner.* (Vogue 12 in. LP VA100118—25s. 3d. plus 9s. 10d. P.T.)

Gary Crosby, Bing's eldest son, made this record in Germany during the spring of 1957. The orchestra directed by Bud Shank (then touring Europe with Bob Cooper) is a kind of musical United Nations Assembly, containing Austrians, Dutchmen, Germans, Indonesians, Americans and one Hungarian. Gary has a lot of his father's relaxation and natural warmth in his singing, and while he is a little inconsistent in this showing he may well develop into a vocalist of importance. He is at his best on such ballads as *One For My Baby* and *Skyark*, although his jazz feeling is evident in Percy Mayfield's *Please Send Me Someone To Love*. Despite an occasional roughness in the brass section the band interprets the arrangements by Bill Holman and Johnny Mandel with sympathy and understanding, and there are some very good solos by Shank (flute and alto) and Germany's Hans Koller (tenor). Atilla Zoller, the Hungarian guitarist, plays extremely well on the tracks on which Gary is supported by just flute, guitar and rhythm. A.M.

Irving Fields Trio. "Broadway Hits In Hi-Fi." *I Could Have Danced All Night: On The Street Where You Live: I've Grown Accustomed To Her Face/We Kiss In A Shadow: March Of The Siamese Children: I Whistle A Happy Tune: Getting To Know You: Hello, Young Lovers.* (H.M.V. 7 in. EP TEG8338—8s. plus 3s. 11d. P.T.)

Pianist Irving Fields, assisted by bass and drums, plays medleys of tunes from "My Fair Lady" and "The King And I" in a negative and generally uninspired fashion. "Music To Converse Against" might have been a more suitable album title, for there is little here to interest the discerning listener. A.M.

Poe Wee Hunt. "Rodgers and Hammerstein a la Dixie". *The March Of The Siamese Children: People Will Say We're In Love: June Is Bustin' Out All Over: No Other Love: Some Enchanted Evening: The Surrey With The Fringe On Top* (Oklahoma! Hello, Young Lovers: That's For Me: A Wonderful Guy: If I Loved You: The Gentleman Is A Dope. (Capitol 12 in. LP T1005—24s. 4jd. plus 9s. 4d. P.T.)

If I say that this kind of thing is making jazz look even more ridiculous than all those saints who march through the streets of the city with just a little while to stay in high society, I suppose I shall be smartly slapped down and told that I was the critic who moaned the loudest about the hackneyed Dixieland repertoire. All the same, I never meant that pseudo-Dixieland bands should mess about with musical comedy tunes, tunes that simply do not suit their style. Admittedly, *The March Of The Siamese Children* might get by as a sort of Mardi Gras pastiche, while *June Is Bustin' Out All Over* can be performed quite reasonably in this rather thin idiom, but there is really nothing here for anyone interested in either jazz or musical comedy. It's a pity, because the Rodgers-Hammerstein tunes are fine ones and the Dixieland style is capable of great things (as the Original Dixieland Jazz Band showed us forty years ago). The purest water, however, just will not mix with the most refined oil.

O.K.

Moe Koffman Quartet. *Little Pixie: Koko-Mamey! Swingin' Shepherd Blues: Hambour Bound.* (London 7 in. EP RE-J1163—9s. 3d. plus 3s. 7jd. P.T.)

Canadian-born Moe Koffman is the man who wrote and first recorded the popular *Swingin' Shepherd Blues*. This EP contains the original version of that tune, which is also still the best many now on the market. None of the remaining tracks has the same commercial potential: *Koko-Mamey* is a thinly disguised *Volga Boatman* and *Little Pixie* is a restrained Latin-American number. Koffman's full "quartet" is heard on the jazz-tinged *Hambour Bound* and as Decca has seen fit to fill the sleeve with advertisements for other EPs, instead of giving recording information, readers may care to know that the all-Canadian personnel comprises Koffman (alto and flute); Ed Karam (baritone); Jack Long (trumpet); Rob McConnell (valve-trombone); Ed Bickert (guitar); Hugh Currie (bass) and Rob Rully (drums).

A.M.

Peggy Lee. "Things Are Swingin'." *It's A Wonderful World: Things Are Swingin': Well All Right: Ridin' High: It's Been A Long, Long Time: Lullaby In Rhythm: Alone Together: I'm Beginning To See The Light: It's A Good, Good Night: You're Getting To Be A Habit With Me: You're Mine You: Life Is For Living.* (Capitol 12 in. LP T1049—24s. 4jd. plus 9s. 4d. P.T.)

Peggy Lee is the vocal equivalent of Stan Getz. She is better equipped, technically, than most of her contemporaries and she has an omnipresent sense of good taste. Jack Marshall's studio orchestra, with its erratic trumpet section, provides support which is seldom entirely suitable. Peggy's *Well Alright, Okay, You Win* is modelled on Joe Williams' version down to the last blue-tinged inflection, but the remaining tracks are less derivative. She swings well on the up-tempo numbers, *Ridin' High* in particular, and her intonation is near-perfect at all times.

A.M.

Rex Middleton's Hi-Fi's. *Sometimes I'm Happy: Bernie's Tune/It's All Right With Me: Undecided.* (H.M.V. 7 in. EP 7EG8347—8s. plus 3s. 1jd. P.T.)

Smooth, neat performances by a Negro quintet directed by Rex Middleton, a singer who—according to the sleeve-note—can fit in anywhere between bass and falsetto tenor. The voicing is high-pitched, as in most vocal groups nowadays, and the arrangements modern and stylish, with a fairly strong beat to them. Buddy Bregman's orchestra provide excellent backing on all four tracks.

C.F.

Louis Prima and Keely Smith. "Las Vegas Prima Style". *Them There Eyes and Honeysuckle Rose (V): Tiger Rag: Embraceable You and I Got It Bad (V): Should I and I Can't Believe That You're In Love With Me (V)/White Cliffs of Dover (V): Holiday For Strings: Greenback Dollar Bill (V): Love Of My Life (O Sole Mio): Too Marvellous For Words (V).* (Capitol 12 in. LP T1010—24s. 4jd. plus 9s. 4d. P.T.)

These light-hearted and rather rowdy performances were recorded around midnight at the Hotel Sahara in Las Vegas. Louis Prima sings his usual knockabout vocals but plays trumpet in a surprisingly sober fashion (notably in *Honeysuckle Rose*). Keely Smith (Mrs. Prima) is only heard singing the first halves of *Embraceable You* and *I Got It Bad*, being rather swamped after that by her husband. Sam Butera plays tenor sax ruthlessly on most of the tracks, but grows more sentimental in *Love Of My Life* and sings in a passable rhythm-and-blues style on *Greenback Dollar Bill*. *Tiger Rag* is treated comically, but *Holiday For Strings* features quite respectable guitar playing by Bob Roberts.

C.F.

Freddy Randall and his Band. "Chicago Jazz." *Professor Jazz: Mushrat Ramble/I'm Coming Virginia: Carolina In The Morning.* (Parlophone 7 in. EP GEP8715—8s. plus 3s. 1jd. P.T.)

All these tracks have been previously issued—in 1953—on 78s and happen to be some of the best Chicago-style jazz records to be made in this country. They feature the first tenor sax solos that Betty Smith recorded with the band. Not world-beaters but very pleasant in their way.

O.K.

Pete Seeger. *Penny's Farm: John Riley: Rissolty Rissolty/The Jam On Gerry's Rocks: Come All Ye Fair and Tender Ladies: Gai Along Little Dogie.* (Topic 7 in. EP TOP93—11s. plus 4s. 3jd. P.T.)

There is no doubt that Pete Seeger has been largely responsible for the current revival of interest in American folk music; that is a good thing, even if the extreme personalisation to be found in the work of most present-day singers, Seeger among them, has resulted in a loss of regional flavour and vitality. The six songs in this collection, all within the Anglo-American tradition, are typical performances of this kind. Although Seeger accompanies himself excellently on the five-string banjo, the general effect is rather colourless.

C.F.

Bob Scobey's Frisco Band. *Wolverine Blues: Comey Island Washboard/That's A Plenty: Beale Street Mama.* (Good Time Jazz 7 in. EP EPG1249)

Pretty Baby. *St. Louis Blues/Dippermouth Blues: Some Of These Days.* (Good Time Jazz 7 in. EP EPG1250—both 9s. 9jd. plus 3s. 10d. P.T.)

Made in 1950, when there was a closer affinity between the Scobey brand of revivalist jazz and the Lu Watters type, these tracks are good examples of music from the early days of the revival. All have been issued here before (on LDG054, in 1954) and they're clean, enthusiastic and entirely harmless performances.

O.K.

STEREO—FURTHER REFLECTIONS

By REID A. RAILTON

"What sort of music sounds best on stereo?" "That demonstration record of the Brahms 1st sounded marvellous. Are they all as good as that, or was it just a carefully-chosen fluke?" "I have that wonderful LP of Dennis Brain playing the Mozart horn concertos. Can stereo really improve on it?" "Has stereo really got to the point where it is worth spending all that money on it?" Etcetera, etcetera, etcetera. Here in America these, and others like them, have been quite crucial questions in Hi-Fi circles, and hitherto nobody has been quite sure of the answers.

There are now over 400 classical stereo recordings in the catalogue, and, though probably nobody (and certainly not this writer) has heard them all, there has been time for enough listening, and for enough sifting of reviews, to form some idea of what the answers are likely to be. At any rate there is enough evidence to show pretty clearly what sort of music the Artist and Repertoire men think sounds best on stereo; and they should know.

After the first wave of enthusiasm had subsided, the experts must have settled down to decide just what it was they had to offer to the public in return for the money they were being invited to spend on stereo, and their conclusions cannot have been altogether comfortable. They must have known (what the public is just beginning to realise) that, with present techniques, it is only certain kinds of musical performance that benefit greatly by stereo reproduction. When stereo records were first demonstrated a year ago, great play was made with the directional effect which it was possible to achieve, e.g. trains running through stations, ping-pong games, etc. What this had to do with the reproduction of music was not very clear at the time, and is even less clear now. Perhaps many of us thought that to have the soprano singing out of one speaker and the tenor out of the other, or the violins on the left and the 'cellos on the right, would be a big step towards realism, and that directionality of this sort was the secret of "that certain something" which stereo undoubtedly possesses. However, it is now becoming fairly clear that directionality *per se* has very little to do with "that certain something". It is easy to be wise after the event, but we might have anticipated this, since there is surely very little directionality in an echoing concert hall, except perhaps in the front row of the stalls.

What, then, is it that is guiding the A and R men in their choice of music to be put on stereo records at this crucial introductory stage? The answer is not difficult to find if one studies the list of classical stereo issues to date. These men have obviously come to the conclusion that stereo pays highest dividends in the reproduction of modern orchestral music, and of large choral groups including grand opera. The more heavily-scored the piece, and the greater the

number of voices, either human or instrumental, the greater the rewards of stereo. This should put Tchaikovsky, Wagner, Stravinsky, et al., at the head of the list—which is exactly where they are.

A little careful listening to stereo and mono recordings of the same performance will soon confirm the wisdom of this choice. Most people will probably agree that the weak spot in modern mono recording has been in the *tutti*s of big symphony orchestras playing heavily-orchestrated pieces. Compared with the originals they have, at best, been inclined to sound muddy, and, at worst, have broken down into meaningless cacophony. It has almost seemed as though we had reached the physical limits of some link in the system (apparently not the mechanical link at the pickup, since the monophonic tapes were not much better), and that it simply could not "take" all the material offered to it. It is exactly here that stereo offers its most dramatic improvement. Again, it almost seems as if the two channels, by sharing the load between them, can carry a signal so complex as to be impossible for one alone.

This amateurish theory may well be nonsense, but, if so, I wish some (genuine) expert would come across with the true explanation, because there is no doubt that in this clarification of complex polyphonic passages lies the germ of that elusive quality which we all appreciate in stereo.

By thus concentrating mainly on heavily-scored pieces, it seems that the manufacturers can be sure that at least the *sound* of their stereo discs will be better than that of their monophonic competitors, whatever the relative merits of the performances may be.

If it is true that the chief advantage of stereo is its proven ability to reproduce sounds of such complexity that they are beyond the powers of a single channel, how is stereo going to fare in the reproduction of comparatively simple music which is well within the range of the conventional disc? This includes pretty well everything from the spoken word up to the more thinly-orchestrated symphonies, such as those of Mozart and Haydn. Here the stereo men are up against some pretty formidable competition. To start with, they are up against those heaven-sent flukes (and there are probably around a hundred of them) in the way of superb mono recordings that do exist among the 20,000-odd records in the catalogue; those combinations, that is, of near-perfect performances with near-perfect reproduction which only happen by chance. Knowing their inability to command such miracles at will, can the engineers inject that "certain something" of stereo into records that will enable them to compete with these old staggers? Again judging by the statistics of the stereo discs so far issued, the answer at present appears to be No.

Take one composer alone—Mozart—whose instrumental music has been particularly well served on mono LPs. In the December American Schwann catalogue there are around 800 Mozart instrumental mono recordings; more than any other composer, and presumably some indication of the popularity of his music. The number of his stereo recordings is seven. As a contrast, Stravinsky has about 130 monophonic, and no less than 16 stereos. These figures seem to show, and listening bears it out, that the stereo boys are doubtful whether they can "do anything" for Mozart, at least in the present state of the art. Stravinsky is, of course, another story (and how!).

It was suggested above that the directional effect was not of major importance in most of the discs at present on the market. In many cases one gets the impression that it has been deliberately toned down because of the difficulty of managing it with certainty and consistency. The "hole in the middle" is obviously one problem, and it also seems to be difficult to prevent instruments and voices from occasionally changing sides in a disconcerting manner. The latter trouble is not confined to stereo, and may be largely the result of ill-matched speaker-response, and it has indeed been the principal argument against the use of two widely separated speakers with a monophonic system. Nevertheless, the fact that the directional effect demands the use of widely spaced speakers does mean that perfectly matched speakers must be used if this objectionable phenomenon is to be avoided. If, on the other hand, the directional effect is subordinated, the speakers can be placed much closer together (without losing any of the stereo clarity), and "voice hopping" becomes less troublesome.

This all fits in with the increasing sales-promotion of stereo "consoles" having everything in one cabinet, and the speakers not more than four or five feet apart. Not much directionality is possible with them in any case, and they also have the resultant advantage that the "listening area" is hardly more critical than it is with a monophonic set. It is possible therefore that the experts have had all this in mind, and have decided that too much directionality is not good for us, and have acted accordingly.

How about other forms of music, and what have the stereo experts been able to make of them? Take that very popular recording subject, the piano concerto. A lot of the standard big-orchestral works have been done, and the best of them undoubtedly beat the best mono recordings, for the same reason that applies to the big symphonies, namely clarity and transparency. The manufacturers seem to be experimenting, both with the degree of separation and with channel emphasis—there is a good deal of variation—in order to give the piano maximum realism, and to keep it fixed in one spot. The most successful examples appear to have comparatively little directional effect. Again it is significant that none of the many Mozart concertos has yet been issued.

Other music-forms that are so far comparatively absent from the stereo lists are chamber music, piano pieces, solo voices, etc., all, be it noted, fairly uncomplicated considered as audio signals, and all represented here and there by mono recordings of very great perfection. In these particular fields, and in the present state of the art, there is little doubt that stereo does not have much to offer; certainly not enough to offset an inferior performance or imperfect sound: there are just too many excellent monos around. However, even in chamber music, stereo does sound slightly different, if not necessarily better. It is a good bet that, as they gather experience, the engineers will learn more about the nature of this difference, and will be able to exploit it in terms of realism or "presence" to the point where

it will finally leave the best monos behind.

One other thing: the stereo boys will have to be very careful about that surface noise. It is unfortunate that, in the 45/45 system, the transducers in the pickup sense the full surface disturbance, instead of only its horizontal component as is the case with the conventional system; but no doubt there is more to it than that. Perhaps this disability is another reason

why stereo has so far concentrated chiefly on high-volume music, where of course it is less noticeable. Incidentally, a few of the latest orchestral stereo discs appear to have been cut at a remarkably high level, thus easing the surface-noise problem a lot. Curiously enough, the commercial pickups seem to take them in their stride without any signs of distress. Perhaps this is the answer.

TECHNICAL TALK

Reproducing Standards

The letters I have received from America and the copies of American magazines that have been forwarded to me since I returned home have revealed that the tendencies which I noted just before leaving are rapidly developing.

Stereo is being taken more seriously and critically. Good equipment was there before I left and better records were making their appearance. I should now judge from the reviews that there are now many more, though the British recordings still seem to hold pride of place.

The changing attitude of the musical critics is most interesting. At first, when the ha-ha boys were raving about directionality and pinpointing, the critics were aloof. They commented on the tendency of the new technique to split the musical performance up into bits and pieces, as though an orchestra or operatic company had no conductor but were allowed to carry on each in his own sweet way. With the advent of the better recordings, that phase soon passed; the critics equipped themselves with first-class apparatus and then became completely won over. Then came what seems to me to be the most interesting stage of all (and I am keeping my eyes well open to observe it amongst my musical colleagues over here!): it was that the stereo reproducing technique was found to improve the reproduction of the best mono recordings to such an extent that they could be, in some cases, even more acceptable than their stereo counterparts. The next discovery was that the better the speakers the more realistic both types of reproduction became: the earlier idea that had been put forward by some technical or semi-technical writers—that good stereo could be had with one good speaker and one indifferent speaker, or with two mediocre speakers—was seen to be unsound. And now, at last, I find responsible critics inveighing, even to the point of anger, against the degradation that is threatened to reproduction standards.

I hope this present campaign for maintenance of high fidelity standards will go on. There are still far too many faults in the usual run of domestic reproducers that need not be there: lumpy or flabby bass, coarse middle, oversibilance higher up and shrieking or steely top strings. All this can, and will, be put right, provided we do not surrender our standards to cheapness and portability. Harold Schonberg's remark to me (which I have quoted elsewhere, but it is worth repeating) is very much to the point: "The cost of stereo of minimum hi-fi quality is bound to be pretty high, whether or not it is taken bit by bit or in one agonising chunk". That most forthright of all critics, E. T. Canby, in his latest article in *Audio* is even more positive, notwithstanding his somewhat halting start last year. I am glad to see, too, that he has become, shall I say, impatient with the multiplication of controls that is taking place over there. He might have added that that is a certain sign that the industry is not sure of itself, or was not when the designs were first put on paper.

Complications Galore!

Here is a list of the pre-amp controls that have been provided by more than one highly respected firm:

1. Inputs for:
 - (a) Ceramic/crystal stereo cartridge
 - (b) Magnetic stereo cartridge
 - (c) Stereo tape head
 - (d) Stereo tuner
 each with separate input level adjustments.
2. Individual channel volume control.
3. " " " " treble " "
4. " " " " bass " "
5. Master volume control.
6. Loudness control.
7. Stereo balance control.
8. Channel reversing.
9. Channel phasing.
10. Blending control.
11. Stereo function switch including Mono A, Mono B, Mono A and B, Stereo, Calibrate.
12. Presence control.

Nearly all these controls are on the front panel. In some cases the individual channel controls are concentric on the same shaft so that either could be moved separately or both together.

One make also has individual channel equalising controls, each with separate "turn-over" and "roll-off" switches, so that there are no fewer than 24 different combinations.

Where is all this leading us and why? First of all, we have the channel balancing complex. It is true that unless the signals are properly balanced at all frequencies the stereo image will hop about. Therefore, it is argued, one must be able to adjust the tone controls for each channel in case the loudspeaker responses are substantially different (e.g., when different types of speaker are used); or in case a ganged control should alter in the course of use. But, it is pertinent to ask, can one make that sort of adjustment by means of tone controls? In any case, would not a much better system be to have two similar monophonic control units and amplifiers with a simple master control unit linking the two control units to the two amplifiers? If one already has a good monophonic system it would certainly be cheaper just to buy a similar one together with a box containing just a ganged volume control, a channel reversing switch and a channel paralleling switch, than to go in for one of these complicated stereo control units. There is indeed much to be said for this alternative, particularly as it avoids the need for a Balance Control.

The second complex is the "hole-in-the-middle" complex. The origin of this is the poor, gimmicky stereo recordings that first came on the market. People got tired of the left-right business and wanted the middle filled up, just as it is with monophonic recordings played stereophonically. So equipment makers set to work to fill in the middle. One lot got the idea that there should be a third speaker between the other two fed with a signal mixed from the other two. Some amplifier makers have accordingly included a "centre channel output" in their stereo control unit so that a third amplifier can be fed with a mixed signal to operate the third loudspeaker. Others have

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just included a mixing control to feed a little bit of channel 1 into channel 2 and a little bit (not necessarily the same amount) of channel 2 into channel 1.

After the pickup makers have striven their hearts out to reduce the cross-talk between the two channels, these other bright boys include controls to put it back again. And with terrific self-satisfaction they call them "Blending Controls"!

From the Side Lines

In these circumstances I welcome the attempts that are being made both by the professional critics and by informed audiophiles such as Mr. Railton, whose further impressions of the American scene are printed on another page.

I should remark, however, that he is making rather a large assumption in his surmise that the Artist and Repertoire men have had much to say in the decisions as to what and when particular recordings should be released. Certainly, it is going much too far to suggest that the A. and R. men have built up a sort of philosophy of stereo which will indicate what sort of music sounds best on stereo.

The process, I fancy, is much more elementary. For some years past, whenever important works, and often when unimportant works, have been recorded, separate and distinct monophonic and stereophonic tape recordings have been made. But until recently the latter were usually regarded as the poor relations, or for experiment only, and for that reason the equipment and care were not lavished on them as on their paying brethren. Then when the stereo balloon burst, the tapes were taken out of store, discs were cut and sent to the record factory, only to reveal that good and clean pressings of stereo are not so easily made as those of mono. Which recordings have been included in the first releases has therefore depended on a number of factors and not wholly on any particular philosophy.

In my view, therefore, it is as yet too early to arrive at other than tentative conclusions as to whether particular types of music are more suitable for stereo treatment than others. For my part, whilst I agree that stereo has so far paid the highest dividends with modern orchestral music, large choral groups and particularly opera, yet I am not at all convinced that the simpler types of music will not benefit. Indeed, I know of some quite simple recordings where the delicate patterning and tracery of the music has been brought out by stereo in a fascinating manner. And that is not all. That "certain something", which Mr. Railton mentions, that richness of instrumental quality, can be brought out even in solo instruments as well as in patterns. Obviously, since monophonic records have been more successful with the simpler types of music the room for improvement is less and the benefits will be later in coming.

It is indeed fortunate in these circumstances that the reproduction of monophonic records should be so much improved by the use of stereo equipment. At one time people thought that all their collection of LP records was about to be made obsolete. That is far from the mark. I should not change over from a mono recording of a work to a stereo unless there were something special about the latter whether in performance or in standard of recording. Available cash would be much better spent in getting the best stereo equipment on the one hand and in adding to the record collection with new pieces on the other.

How to change to Stereo

Many of my correspondents have asked my advice on how to make the change. I believe that the important thing is to have a plan by

which one can change step by step. That is easier said than done, for it all depends on the starting point. Thus, if one has a "packaged" radiogram to start with, it is wise to do nothing before one is in a position to dispose of it and start afresh. But if one has a good amplifier and speaker system then a variety of courses is open.

First of all, stereo calls for the best in turntables. A rumble-free turntable is a good investment even for playing monophonic records; but a stereo pickup is far more sensitive to rumble and therefore in any change the particular turntable should be checked with such a pickup. If the dealer will not demonstrate to you that the turntable is rumble-free, you would be wise to go at once to another dealer.

Secondly, a good stereo pickup is better even for monophonic records than one which has little vertical compliance. It is therefore a good investment from the very start. But it should be remembered that a stereo pickup (and more especially one of the magnetic variety) calls for a more sensitive amplifier control unit system. There is room here for a special type of pre-amplifier, or rather two special types; and I have reason to think that several firms are contemplating their manufacture. Both are simple one-valve affairs to give an amplification of about 50. The first should be a straight amplifier with no other purpose than to bring up the signal level; the second should also have equalisation correction to match a magnetic pickup to CCIR characteristics.

Two of these (or a twin) will of course ultimately be required for stereo. But only one will be needed in the first instance to enable a stereo cartridge to be used for monophonic reproduction, for in that case both channels from the cartridge can be paralleled at the input (or in the case of the Decca pickup the special monophonic output can be used).

For those who already have a good mono reproducer, I suggest therefore that the first stage is to invest in the best turntable you can; and the second is to obtain a good stereo pickup, with or without extra pre-amplifier according to need.

The next stage, I suggest, is to plan for a good, twin loudspeaker system. This may be a relatively expensive stage, for it is wise not to compromise. It may also be difficult domestically, for loudspeakers are apt to take up a lot of room. But don't, please don't, be bamboozled by any voluble salesman into the idea that the loudspeakers, or even one of them, can be quite tiny inexpensive affairs. In recent years a number of designs have been produced for extending the range of small enclosures and some of them have been very good indeed. But none of these is cheap and it still remains true that up to a certain limit, the larger the better. Difficult decisions are therefore involved. If you already have a good loudspeaker system should you duplicate it or change over to a different system that would be more easily accommodated? Alternatively, could you keep your existing speaker and use a different and less ambitious type for the second speaker? These are questions that cannot well be answered on *à priori* grounds: knowledge of the particular circumstances is always required. Generally speaking, however, I myself believe that it is always best to have a pair of similar, matched speakers, if possible. Speakers with dissimilar characteristics never show the finer qualities of stereo, only the gimmicks. That is why I consider the present B.B.C. broadcasts, with one channel via F.M. and another via TV, to be so futile. Whoever heard a TV loudspeaker that had any pretension to match a Hi-Fi system?

The last stage in the changeover is the duplication of the amplifier and either the

substitution of a special stereo control unit for the monophonic, or the addition of another mono control unit and a master control. Again, circumstances must dictate which of these two courses to follow. If my present equipment were "dated" I should myself be tempted to watch our "small ads." to see if I could duplicate at reasonable cost! There will be a number of Master Control Units available soon. There are several in America already.

Starting from Scratch

The best course if one were starting from scratch would be somewhat different. Again it is wise to invest in a good turntable from the start. It would be well, too, to have a good stereo amplifier and control unit even though it were to be used monophonically to begin with. If cash were short I should be tempted to make do with a good monophonic crystal cartridge which I could change later but I should not delay that change too long.

Again, the heart-breaking decision will be what to do about speakers. I strongly advise the choice to be made of a unit that, in all the domestic circumstances, can be duplicated as soon as possible. Let me repeat once again. For good stereo, a generous, balanced loudspeaker system is essential and such a system is best also for mono.

What power rating should the amplifier be? The Americans go in for 50 plus 50 watts, or at the least 25 plus 25 watts. But they never actually use so much power in ordinary home conditions (or at least I hope not). For 200 sq. ft. rooms over here I should say that 10 plus 10 watts is ample, and even 4 plus 4 can be quite satisfactory. P.W.

The Audio Fair and the R.E.C.M.F. Exhibition

The venue for the Audio Fair this year is the Russell Hotel, Russell Square, and the dates are 2nd to 5th April. This is before the R.E.C.M.F. Exhibition at Grosvenor House (6th-9th) and not after as in previous years.

We understand that the official rules for the Fair are such as to exclude some manufacturers whose names are well known to our readers, on the ground that they deal directly with the public and not through the Trade. Accordingly, Northern Radio Services will be giving special demonstrations at their showrooms and Daystrom Ltd. have arranged to give a demonstration of their products at the Royal Hotel just north of Russell Square. Sound Sales, who are participating in the Fair, will have a special demonstration in the Imperial Hotel, next door to the Russell.

Next month we hope to give a preview of many of the interesting things that will be shown at the Fair: how much, of course, will depend on the information received before we go to press.

Correction

In the report of the Heathkit Valve Voltmeter, in the February issue, we failed to give Mr. George Tillet his correct title. He is in fact the Chief Engineer at the Gloucester factory.

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TECHNICAL REPORTS

Symphony Stereo Amplifier. Price 19 gns. Northern Radio Services, 11 Kings College Road, London, N.W.3.

This Stereo Amplifier is really five units on one chassis: two amplifiers and two control units with a common power supply. It therefore represents stereo amplification reduced to its simplest possible terms.

Not that this means skimping of components, for a substantial Woden mains transformer and Woden output transformers adequate for the output produced, are used, and the choke-capacity smoothing is generous enough to reduce the hum level to inaudibility. Moreover the ganged volume and tone controls are standard quality and in one respect, the "middle" control, more enterprising than one usually finds even in expensive products. I regard this control, by the way, as a valuable one, for it enables one to deal promptly with the over-sibilance (and other accentuations of the upper middle register) which one too often finds in input signals. The construction and wiring, too, are of high standard.

How then, has the economy been secured? Simply by designing for a lower output power and for the input sensitivity needed for a stereo crystal pickup such as the Acos, the Garrard or the Ronette. It is indeed remarkable how design becomes simplified when one restricts one's demands in this way and without any compromise as to quality, and all this is reflected immediately in the cost. If one wants to use a magnetic pickup with much lower output than the crystal types, a double pre-amplifier containing an extra stage of amplification plus the special C.C.I.R. equalisation correction will be needed and this Northern Radio Services can provide.

This stereo amplifier, then, is virtually two Symphony No. 1 Amplifiers in parallel but with one power pack. Each amplifier has a double triode ECC81 valve for amplification and tone control and a 6BW6 valve for "single-ended" output with negative feedback to the first stage. The ganged controls are: Selector switch, Scratch, Treble, Middle, Bass, and Volume and there is provision for tape and radio input as well as for records. There is sufficient "extra" H.T. and L.T. power for a modest tuner or pre-amplifier.

The rated power output for each channel is 5 watts. But in our tests we found that that figure was only reached at middle frequencies. At 40 c/s and above 12 kc/s the permissible power before grid current appeared in the output valves fell to just under 4 watts. We should prefer therefore to rate the channels at 4 watts apiece. This, however, is adequate for the purpose which the amplifier sets out to fulfil.

In an ordinary small room a power output of 4 + 4 watts is ample on stereo and since there is a setting on the Selector Switch to

parallel the channels for mono reproduction, it is usually adequate in that case also.

Here, then is a stereo amplifier which fulfils the basic requirements for stereo reproduction at moderate volume levels without debasement of quality. And all this at a remarkably low price. P.W.

Mastertape Book Containers. Price 7s. 6d. each. 6 books with rack, 62s. 6d. M.S.S. Recording Co., Colnbrook, Bucks.

The problem of tape storage is one that must have exercised the mind of everyone who preserves his recordings for any length of time. The ordinary cardboard boxes in which spools are packed are none too strong.

Here is an answer which is both convenient and satisfactory—a set of Mastertape books. Each book has an inner cardboard container which houses two 7 in. spools and slides in the book from the back. A set of numbered labels is provided which can be stuck on the book-end for the purpose of identification, but of course labels showing titles could be used if desired.

The bookrack is useful too for housing a few volumes that may be in constant use, or those that will be needed for an evening's entertainment.

So far, the only books available are those that contain two spools. This is convenient for recordings that take one, two or four spools. But there are recordings that take three spools (e.g., many operas). For these a larger size of book would be worth while. P.W.

Celestion Colaudio Loudspeaker. Price: £32 10s. (without Filter Unit or Coupling Unit). Rola Celestion Ltd., Thames Ditton, Surrey.

Makers' Specification:

Frequency range: 30-15,000 c/s.

Bass resonance: 35 c/s.

Peak power handling capacity: 25 watts.

Nominal size: 15-in.

Total flux: 290,000 maxwells.

Impedance: 15 ohms.

Through the years that I have been engaged in or around the sound industry the name of Celestion has become very familiar. It is a little disturbing to think that those years now approach 30, but a consolation to think that I started very young! During much of that time the major output of Celestion speakers has been of the variety termed "Commercial" rather than the more specialised and developed types required for high quality reproduction. This is not to say that they were not good loudspeakers, for indeed units of their manufacture have made their way with every success into complete speakers and equipments bearing well-known names. Of late they have shown an interest in catering for the obviously growing high fidelity market, culminating in the appearance at the last London Audio Fair of the unit which forms the subject of this review.

The basis and the bass of the Colaudio is provided by a 15 in. cone unit with a cast frame and a substantial magnet 6½ inches in diameter and 3 inches deep, all finished in black wrinkle enamel. The gently curved cone is suspended at the periphery by a surround of what appears to be thin sponge rubber: at its apex is a voice coil of 3 in. diameter, which is centred by a corrugated suspension of 5 inches in diameter. The actual diameter of the cone is 12½ inches.

Attached to the centre pole of the magnet and surrounded by a dust seal is a forked bracket which supports the treble unit assembly. This is a 6½ in. by 2½ in. rectangular frame containing two 2 in. diameter direct radiator pressure type high frequency units. They are



of similar construction to the "presence units" used so successfully with the G.E.C. metal-cone speakers. Stacking the two units one above the other assists the distribution of the treble frequencies which will tend to fan out horizontally with this type of assembly—now used quite extensively for public address work and termed a "line source" loudspeaker. It is not a "column form" of loudspeaker as the makers state in their literature and from which they presumably derive the name. However it is a sound and practical way of avoiding the type of treble which seems to be squirted at the listener. In this case the assembly has been arranged to tilt over a few degrees in the vertical direction in order that the listening area can be centred in the distribution arc if the system has to be mounted in an unnaturally high or low position.

The unit sent for review was supplied in a Lockwood bass reflex cabinet of approximately 7 cubic feet and fitted with a simple single inductor and capacitor crossover. The cone resonance in free air was found to be 44 c/s, but in the cabinet the typical double humps appeared at 32 and 70 c/s showing that unit and enclosure were happily mated. By the way, it is not unusual for new speakers to show a cone resonant frequency slightly higher than the makers quote. After some months use it will drop, as continual flexing loosens up the suspension.

It is going to be difficult to describe the results of listening tests on this unit because it has no obvious faults which can be isolated for criticism. On the whole the rendering is warm and lucid, well defined and impressive, but not the impressiveness which soon becomes trying, then tiring and eventually tiresome. The warmth is accounted for by a certain amount of coloration at middle and lower middle frequencies and yet it is rarely unpleasant and often seems to be an improvement (heresy this!). The bass is full and pleasant and no doubling takes place at volume levels likely to be used domestically. At the other end of the range response is maintained reasonably smoothly to 12,000 c/s, drops slowly to 15,000 c/s and then fades away fairly quickly. There is no hard spitting treble which sometimes mars the horn loaded type of pressure unit, but there is adequate life in everything one listens to.

To sum up, this is not an analytical loudspeaker; it garnishes the truth with little flourishes of its own invention, but on the whole they are in good taste. G.E.H.



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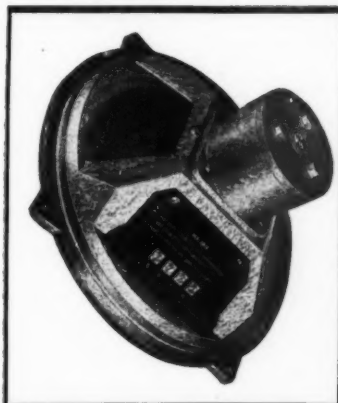
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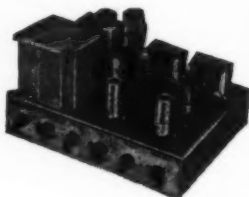
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Speeds: 7½ i.p.s. and 3½ i.p.s.

Track change: Automatic change at end of run from left to right.

Manual change by button control with visual indicator.

Spools: Up to 7 in.

Inputs: Microphone—high impedance, 2.5 mV.

Radio—low impedance, 40 kV.

Radio or Gramophone—350 mV.

For record (or public address) both microphones plus radio or gramophone can be mixed, each with independent volume control.

On playback, one microphone plus gramophone or radio may be mixed with the tape signal, again with independent volume control.

Controls: Volume:

1. Radio (or gramophone).

2. Mic 1.

3. Mic 2 or playback.

4. Monitor.

Bass: +6 to -18 at 50 c/s.

Treble: +6 to -18 at 12 kc/s.

Zero (CCIR) settings calibrated.

Buttons for Record, Record Safety, P.A., Track Change, Playback, Fast left (2 mins. for 1,200 ft. tape), Fast right.

Tape Position: Numerical Counter.

Remote Control: Additional unit can be plugged in to control start, stop and track change.

Loudspeaker: Elliptical 10 in. by 6 in. High note 4 in. unit with diffuser.

Frequency Response:

Direct amplifier in P.A. condition.

30 c/s to 15 kc/s ± 1 db.

30 c/s to 18 kc/s ± 2 db.

From tape at 7½ i.p.s.

30 c/s to 12 kc/s ± 3 db.

30 c/s to 15 kc/s, better than ± 5 db.

From tape at 3½ i.p.s.

30 c/s to 7 kc/s ± 3 db.

Oscillator: Push-pull type. Erase level at 1 kc/s better than 70 db.

300 c/s better than 60 db.

Amplifier hum and noise: Referred to 10 watts out, -52 db.

Wow and flutter: Better than 0.2 per cent peak to peak.

Output: Ultra linear push-pull at 10 watts with limiter for internal speakers.

External L.S. at 15 ohms at full output.

Distortion: Less than 0.5 per cent at 1 kc/s at rated output.

Values: UF86, for high impedance mic. only.
ECC83, pre-amp for replay or low impedance mic.

ECC83(1), tape correction on replay.

ECC83(2), tone control on replay and P.A.

ECC81, driver and phase splitter.

EL84(2), output with feedback to driver.

12BH7, Oscillator for bias and erase.

EZ81, HT rectifier.

EM81, modulation level indicator.

Mains supply: 110, 125, 200, 220, 245 volts at 500 c/s A.C. (60 c/s to order).

Dimensions: H. 10½" x D. 15" x W. 16½".

Weight: 48 lb.

I first saw the prototype of this machine at last year's Audio Fair, and since then I have been looking forward to the time when production models would be available for me to try out. The specification was particularly ambitious, more so indeed than that of any domestic recorder I had previously seen. Not



Simon SP4 Tape Recorder

only is there a 10 watt high fidelity amplifier, as in the previous Simon model SP2, but there is also two-way recording and playback, with automatic reversal at the end of each tape run. On recording one can therefore record from left to right on the top track, and then, automatically and (if desired) without attention, from right to left on the bottom track; and when that is done the machine automatically shuts off. I took advantage of this facility the other night, for example, to make a trial recording of the broadcast of *H.M.S. Pinafare* on long-play tape. The first act lasted nearly 55 minutes which was too long for one run of even LP tape at 7½ i.p.s. (45 minutes). So after about 30 minutes I waited for a convenient pause in the performance and then just pressed the Track Change button. Within a second the tape direction was reversed and the recording went on, apparently without interruption.

On playback, the automatic reversing facility continues even after the right to left run; so that a recorded tape would go on repeating itself for ever and ever (or thereabouts). The value of this to hotels, restaurants and the like will at once be apparent, especially in view of the relatively large output available. And it is without any doubt a high quality output, as good, in fact, as ever one is likely to want from a 10-watt amplifier.

The internal loudspeakers, though much more than mere monitors, are not, of course, capable of exhibiting this high quality to advantage; for that, one has to connect to a good external loudspeaker system, the bigger the better. The output is adequate for all normal domestic purposes. But there is no objection to connecting up from the 15 ohm external speaker socket to a higher-powered amplifier, if that is desired; which is another indication that the output transformer of the SP4 is of excellent quality. The inclusion of a high-quality 10-watt amplifier is of particular value to those who do not already possess a hi-fi amplifier. All they need do to have a disc as well as a tape reproducer is to invest in a good turntable and one of the better crystal pick-ups. One could, perhaps, have wished that the radio or gramophone input sensitivity had been 200 mV instead of 350 mV for this purpose; but the input as it is will not be amiss. Alternatively, if it is desired to have a magnetic pick-up, a small pre-amplifier will also be needed to give the necessary playback equalisation to CCIR characteristic as well as to give about a 20:1 amplification.

For a complete monophonic recording/reproducing outfit one might then have, in addition to this recorder.

1. Transcription turntable, pickup and arm.
2. If pickup is magnetic, an equalisation pre-amp.
3. FM Tuner giving not less than about 200 mv output (self-powered).
4. Cabinet to house 1-3.
5. External loudspeaker system.

The high opinion of the performance that we had gained from our recording and listening tests was fully confirmed when we came to measure the performance. We found it to be considerably better than the Specification in every respect except one; and that one was the relatively unimportant one that the treble boost at 12 kc/s could only be set to 3 db instead of 6 db maximum. Here are our figures:

1. **Replay from TBT1 Test Tape.**

c/s	40	60	110	200	500	1k
Track 1 db	+1	+3	+1	+1	+1	0
Track 2 db	+1.5	+3.5	+1	+1	+1	0
c/s	2k	4k	6k	8k	10k	
Track 1 db	0	0	+1	+2.5	+3	
Track 2 db	+5	+1	+2.5	+4	+5	

Notice the similarity between the two tracks. This is possible because the heads are specially matched and numbered so that if ever a replacement should be required the new head will balance the old one.

2. **Record/Replay at 7½ i.p.s.**

c/s	30	40	60	110	200	500
db	-1	-2	+1	+1.5	+1.5	+5
c/s	1k	2k	4k	6k	8k	10k
db	0	+1	+2	+2.5	+3	+3
c/s	12k	14k	15k	16k	17k	18k
db	+2	+1	0	0	-2	-6

3. **Record/Replay at 3½ i.p.s.**

c/s	30	40	60	110	200	500	1k
db	-3	-2.5	-1	+1	+5	0	0
c/s	2k	4k	6k	7k	8k	9k	10k
db	+1.5	+3	+2.5	0	0	-1	-8

4. **P.A. Amplifier** (Controls set as for CCIR).
Frequency response to ± 2 db, 22 c/s to 19 kc/s.

5. **Power Output.**

30 c/s—5.4 watts: 40 c/s—9.6 watts:
50 c/s to 20 kc/s—11 watts.

6. **Stability.** Excellent.

7. **Tone Controls:**

Treble + 3 db to -19 db at 12 kc/s.

Bass + 6 db to -20 db at 50 c/s.

8. **Flutter and Wow:** Negligible.

I was not surprised by this magnificent result. For I had previously taken the opportunity when I collected the instrument, to spend an hour or so in the factory watching the heads being made and calibrated, the bearings being lapped and tested for accuracy, and the mechanical and electrical assembly being carried out. For an instrument of this calibre (and complication) just-so isn't good enough; every part and every piece of wiring must be top-line. Otherwise, maintenance and servicing problems might be considerable.

In building the SP4 therefore the greatest possible care is taken at every stage; and at the end, the power output and frequency response of every instrument is checked before and after an eight hours' run.

There are one or two other features that remain to be noticed. First, as regards the motor. It is of course of outsize and controls all the operations—flywheel and capstan and spools; forward and reverse, slow and fast; and track change. The mechanism, naturally, is complicated, but it is so accurately balanced that the noise level is commendably low. The indirect drive ensures also that the capstan and spool bearings remain cool, thereby safeguarding the tape which does not take kindly to heat.

Again, on the electrical and electromagnetic side, hum and noise level is very low, by far the lowest of any two-way machine I have ever handled. This is probably due, to a large extent, to the fact that on recording and playback the magnetic head in operation is completely screened by a mumetal cover.

A word of commendation must also be added for the tape transport mechanism. The tape slot is so wide and unimpeded that tape threading is easy. The brake mechanism, too, is positive and instantaneous.

With all the multiple functions that the SP4 includes, one might have found the layout so complicated that servicing would be difficult. Happily, that is not so. The deck cover (which, by the way, is given a clearance above the main casing so that ventilation is improved) is readily removed and then the whole framework can be lifted out by means of two special tools which are supplied to dealers. Every part, both of mechanism and amplifier, is then accessible. I first had experience of this framework/chassis type of construction in the E.M.I. professional recorders, and have always found it so convenient that I shall ever remain a firm advocate of it.

Lastly, I must commend the Instruction Manual which accompanies the recorder. It is well-written, informative, and beautifully styled and presented.

A close perusal of this report and specification will reveal that there are a number of features, and valuable features, possessed by this recorder that are not possessed, at any rate all together, by any other. I have therefore asked myself whether there are any others that it does not have. I have thought of just three:

1. It will not take spools larger than 7 in. But the value of this is discounted partly by the fact that excellent long play (and soon, no doubt, double play) tape has become available, but more especially by the reliable reversal mechanism which has completely abolished the annoyance and the lost time of turning over and reversing the spools which is the rule with conventional machines. Moreover, in this case the possible objection of difference in

recording characteristics between the two tracks has been obviated by careful matching of the heads.

2. There are no separate record and replay amplifiers and heads with the result that one cannot immediately monitor from the tape and compare the recorded signal with the incoming signal. Monitoring is, however, arranged up to the output of the amplifier, so it is only the functioning of the magnetic heads and of the tape itself that is not included. Clearly, an appreciable increase of both size and complexity would have resulted from the inclusion of two other heads and another amplifier to give this extra facility.

3. Useful "mixing" facilities have been included so that two, and in some cases three, signals can be controlled and recorded on the tape simultaneously. But the operation of the erase head prevents any signal being recorded afterwards—say during the process of editing a tape.

This extra facility can, however, readily be added by insertion of a make and break switch, or a link, in the line to each erase head, so that the erase signal may be interrupted if desired.

My final conclusion is definite and unequivocal. I give the SP4 first-class marks for its comprehensive design, for its cleanness and thoroughness of construction, and for its excellent performance. I should like to confirm the sentence that is given in the descriptive leaflet on the recorder, for it sums up succinctly what I should wish to say:

"This is a tape recorder that is outstanding by any standards the world over." P.W.

Decca Stereo Pickup and Arm. Price £22.

Decca Record Co. Ltd., 9 Albert Embankment, London, S.E.11.

Makers' Specification:

Impedance: 5,000 ohms at 400 c/s.

Recommended load: 50,000 ohms.

Stylus: $\frac{1}{2}$ mil radius diamond.

Armature mass and compliance referred to stylus: Less than 1 milligram.

Order of 3.5×10^{-6} cm/dyne.

Playing Weight: 3.5 grams.

Arm Dimensions: Overall length, 12.5 in.

Height, 1.75 in. (plus 0.75 in., minus 0.375 in.).

Stylus to vertical axis: 9 in.

Overlap of spindle: 0.615 in.

Linear Offset: 3.44 in.

Colour Coding (Slide-on, 4-contact connections):

Red—left channel.

Green—right channel.

Yellow—lateral.

Screen—Common.

Ever since I first heard stereo discs in 1957 I have regarded this pickup cartridge as setting a standard of performance which was not likely to be excelled.

Now, after hearing many others of different types—British, German, Danish, Dutch, American—I am still of the same opinion. I know of four others, and no more, that come close to that standard, but not one that I should say is better. To understand why, one has to answer two questions.

What are the qualities that one should look for in a stereo cartridge? And are any of these more important than the rest?

A year ago I rather fear that these questions would have defeated me. I am not sure that complete answers can be given even today. But at least the main points are clear.



1. A long range of frequency response, though desirable, is not so important for stereo as one had thought necessary for mono. At the present stage I should regard a range from 30 c/s to 12 kc/s as very good. A range from 30 c/s to 16 kc/s is excellent.

Smoothness of response (absence of sharp peaks) is equally, if not more, important.

Similarity of response for each channel is likewise important. If there are humps or troughs they should be at the same frequencies and of like dimensions in each channel.

Subject to these points, it does not much matter whether the response generally rises or falls with frequency. It should be measured with a stereo test record such as Decca SXL2057 and not with a monophonic record.

2. The cross-talk between the two channels should be less than -14 db over the part of the frequency range where the stereo information lies. The reason for my choice of that figure is that I understand that it is the normal figure of cross-talk by bone conduction between the two ears. A reduction of the figure to 10 db is not of much moment; but it is better for it to be sensibly constant within the range rather than have it, say, 20 db at one frequency and 3 db at another.

The important range over which the cross-talk figures should be similar may be taken to be 500 c/s to 8 kc/s. An extension of this range down to 300 c/s and up to 12 kc/s is desirable.

3. At all parts of the essential frequency range the waveform should be free from harmonics. Harmonic distortion at the lower end is much less tolerable than at the upper end. The frequency of a second harmonic at 500 c/s is only 1 kc/s, whereas that of 10 kc/s is 20 kc/s, which is outside the audible range so that the former is far more important. The objection to the latter is rather that though it is inaudible, its presence probably means that intermodulation distortion will occur when two notes near that frequency are being produced at the same time; and this will probably give a little whistery edge to the reproduction.

4. The frequency of the high note resonance of a pickup is determined by the groove compliance and the mass of the moving parts as seen from the stylus. With a $\frac{1}{2}$ -mil stylus, and even more with a $\frac{1}{4}$ -mil stylus, the former is increased (for the same playing weight) compared with that for a monophonic 1 mil, though tracing distortion is reduced, other things being equal. On the other hand, in a stereo pickup the effective mass is usually substantially increased. Both features conspire to lower the resonance point. It is not at all easy to get it as high as 10 kc/s, especially for a moving coil pickup, even with a $\frac{1}{4}$ -mil stylus.

5. For the stylus to trace easily, and particularly at low frequencies, both the lateral and vertical compliances, as seen from the stylus, must be larger than we have been accustomed to in monophonic pickups. With these the vertical compliance was less than 5×10^{-7} cm/dyne, even for the best cartridges. For stereo a much larger value is necessary. Otherwise, the playing weight would have to be increased and the resulting wear would be excessive.

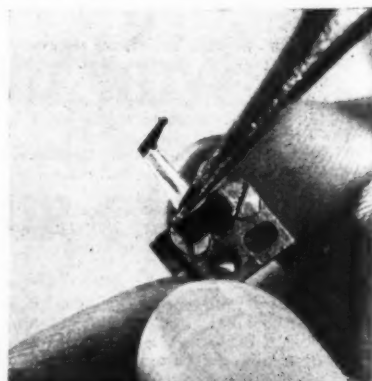
6. All these elements taken together should be such that a playing weight of not more than 6 grms (with a $\frac{1}{2}$ -mil stylus) and 4 grms (with a $\frac{1}{4}$ -mil stylus) should be feasible.

The adjustment of playing weight for a given cartridge may be critical if the vertical compliance is secured by means of a more or less flexible cantilever. I found with my American Grado cartridge, for example, that whereas tracing was perfect with a playing weight of 2½-3 grms, the stylus just bumped about in the groove when it was increased to 5 grms, and slithered at a playing weight of under 2 grms.

7. In a stereo cartridge it is always a good investment to have a low-mass, highly polished, properly shaped diamond stylus, so as to keep wear down to the lowest proportions; and for the same reason, the record should be kept scrupulously clean and free from dust.

8. The carrying arm should be designed to have minimum tracking error and side pressure. But I shall have more to say about this on a future occasion. I am at present in the midst of some interesting tests.

I make no apology for setting out these considerations at some length. For the Decca pickup fulfils all the basic requirements in exemplary fashion. The frequency range is long and without peaks, and is virtually the same for both channels (± 2 db from 50 c/s to 12 kc/s). The channel separation (so far as we have been able to measure it) is adequate. The waveform was excellent save for a little second harmonic at 8/9 kc/s (indicating a probable resonance between



The insertion of the stylus and armature into the clamping plate.

Hear the Decca ffss pick-up



This remarkable high-precision product has undoubtedly been generally accepted as the finest pick-up obtainable today for both stereo and mono records.

Mr. Redington, Managing Director of Bernard Smith (Radio) Ltd., Barnstaple, has thirty years experience of record reproduction. Hitherto he has despaired of finding a commercial pick-up to satisfy his exacting requirements. He is an independent expert of standing and has written to us about the Decca ffss pick-up.

The following is extracted from his letter:

"The pick-up passes all the normal frequency

response tests with flying colours . . .

"More important, however, than any laboratory test is the listening test. Reproduction from the new stereo discs is a revelation . . . not only is the high frequency response there, but it is maintained . . . when high frequency transients are normally lost due to the stylus losing contact with the groove walls for much of the time.

"Reproduction from mono discs is equally striking . . ."

If you do not already have a Decca ffss pick-up you will certainly want one as soon as you have heard it. Supplies are now available and you should be able to hear one at your hi-fi dealer's. Or why not visit us at the Audio Fair? We shall be demonstrating both this fabulous transducer and Decca domestic stereo equipment.

PRICE **£22** (TAX PAID)

With the Decca ffss pick-up mono records sound better than ever before

London Audio Fair 1959—3rd-5th April, Hotel Russell.

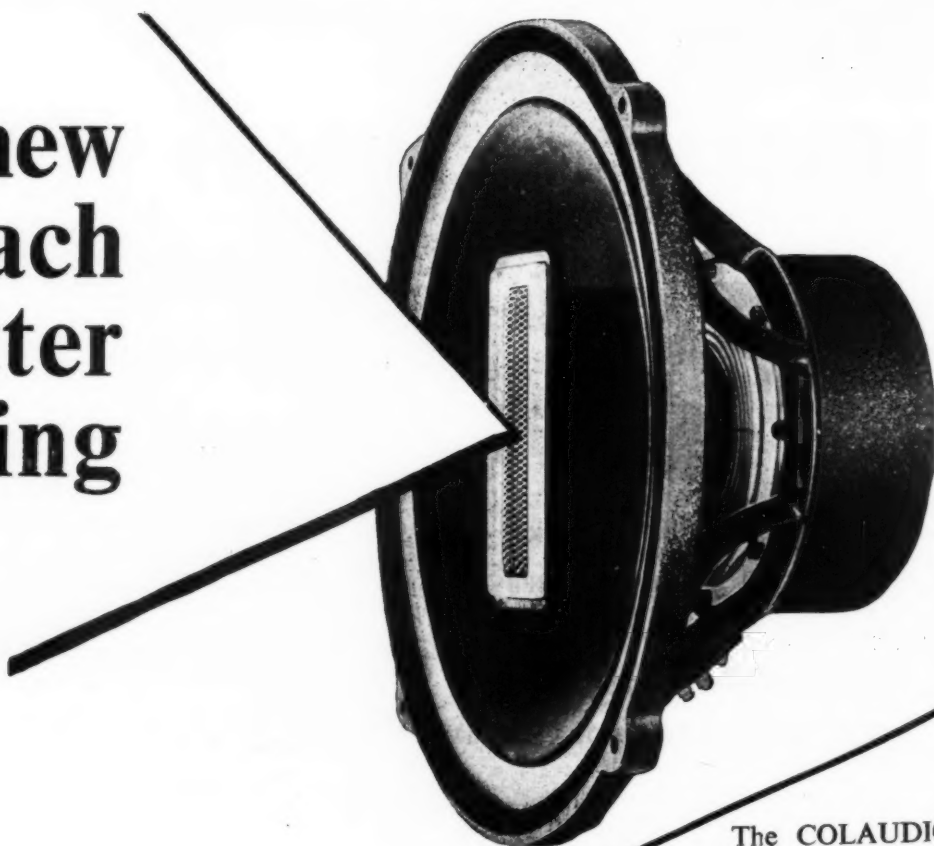
You will find Decca in rooms 319 and 320.

We have a limited supply of free tickets to the Fair if you care to write for what you need stating the day on which you wish to go. If you cannot go to the Audio Fair and have difficulty in hearing the Decca ffss pick-up, please write to our Special Products Division.

DECCA RADIO & TELEVISION

1-3 Brixton Road London SW9

... a new
approach
to better
listening



ESSENTIAL DATA

Nominal Size	15"
Peak Power Handling Capacity	25 watts
Voice Coil Diameter	3"
Total Flux	290,000 Maxwells
Frequency Response	30-15,000 c/s
Bass Resonance	35 c/s
Impedance at 400 c/s	15 ohms

CELESTION

COLAUDIO

Rola Celestion Ltd. THAMES DITTON, SURREY, ENGLAND.

Telephone : Emberbrook 3402/6

The COLAUDIO provides a new incentive to listening, creates a new realism in reproduced sound, adds a new beauty to music and the finer nuances of speech. Combining a 15 in. direct radiator bass loudspeaker with two direct radiator, pressure-type high frequency reproducers in column form, the COLAUDIO is the culmination of over thirty years research, development and manufacture of loudspeakers for all purposes. Its perfection of tone can be truly appreciated only by an aural test—once heard, you will never be satisfied until you install one in your own reproducing equipment.

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16 kc/s and 18 kc/s), and a third harmonic at 10 kc/s (indicating a probable resonance at about 30 kc/s). These resonance points would be very high even for a mono pickup and are just fantastically high for stereo: and the fact that we could observe them is conclusive evidence that the response of the two channels goes well above 20 kc/s, though if confirmation were required the monophonic measurements are ample for the purpose. The vertical and lateral compliances are so high that the stylus traces comfortably at 3 grms. The makers recommend $3\frac{1}{2}$ grms and our measurements were taken at that playing weight. But I have a notion, which I have not yet been able to confirm, that with this pickup head a rather lighter weight would have given even better figures. So far this notion is only based on listening tests. At any rate, I can positively assert that at both 3 and $3\frac{1}{2}$ grms there is no audible "needle talk", even so close as 2 feet.

The listening tests were satisfactory, too, from every other point of view and on all records.

How has all this been achieved? Simply by cunning design and extremely fine workmanship. In principle the operation is such that records made on either hill-and-dale *cut* lateral or on the 45/45 system could be reproduced, by suitable coil connections. It has been known since Blumlein's time that the two are inter-convertible by the simple processes of addition and subtraction of voltages; and this design, which is fundamentally a V/L sensing, takes advantage of that fact so as to function on 45/45 records.

The armature is a tiny strip of magnetic material in the form of a right angle. At one end is the stylus, mounted along the vertical length of the strip; the end of the horizontal portion is anchored to the casing. A thin Terylene thread (T) is attached to the armature just above the stylus and taken back to the casing. This hardly affects the lateral or vertical displacement of the armature but effectively prevents the vertical portion from being dragged out of its proper central position by the longitudinal motion of the groove. The use of Terylene instead of a metallic wire is one of the improvements made in the production models over the earlier prototypes.

Schematically, the system is as in Fig. 1.

Lateral motions of the stylus vary the reluctance of the gap at L; vertical motions that of the gap at V. With the pole pieces at L a single coil l is associated; with that at V there are two coils v and v^1 . These coils are so wound that comparable motions produce equal voltages in each. The connections are such that if the record modulation (45/45) is on one wall only the voltage appearing between the red and common terminals is $l + v$ ($=2l$) whilst that produced between the green and common terminals is $l - v^1$ ($=0$); whilst if the modulation is on the other wall only, the voltages are $l - v$ ($=0$) and $l + v^1$ ($=2l$). On the other hand, purely lateral motion will effect only the coil l , thereby making it possible to use that coil (yellow and common) for monophonic records; and purely vertical motion will not affect coil l but only v and v^1 , thereby avoiding the transfer of pinch effect distortion to the yellow and common terminals.

This right-angle armature arrangement in effect divides the moving mass into two parts: one (about $\frac{1}{2}$ mg) appearing at the stylus for lateral movements and the other (about 1 mg) for vertical movements. The H.F. resonance is therefore higher for the lateral motion than that for the vertical. These remarkably low figures are in themselves evidence of the small dimensions of the parts; and indeed, considering the apparent complications of coils and pole-pieces, the compactness is a testimony to the manufacturing ingenuity.

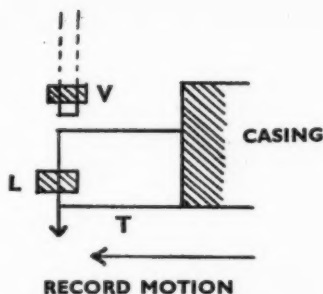


Fig. 1: Side View (lateral pole pieces not shown).

This is certainly a precision instrument of a high order. Yet, having regard to its delicacy, it is remarkably robust (and here again the production model compares favourably with the prototype). It must, of course, be treated with the respect due to such an instrument and not ill-treated either by rough handling (e.g. dropping on record or being carelessly lifted off) or by flicking the stylus with the finger to see if the connections are live (it has been calculated that this may put a force on the stylus equivalent to about a pound weight!).

The carrying arm has been specially designed to give the freedom of motion which a cartridge of this character demands, and it is free from objectionable resonances. It is rather longer than has been usual of late and this I commend. I also commend its design from the point of view of alignment and side pressure. The intermodulation distortion due to this varies as the tracking error divided by the radius of the groove. The linear offset and overlap, specified for this arm, are the best possible values to keep the tracking distortion at a minimum from an outside radius of 6 in. to an inner radius of $2\frac{1}{2}$ in.; and stereo discs (and most mono discs) are not recorded to a smaller radius than that nowadays.

Test Records used:

Monophonic: Decca LXT5346;

Stereo 45/45: Decca SXL2057.

(1 cm/sec at 1 kc/s)

Output: per cm/sec r.m.s.

Lat. 1.15 mV

Vert. L 1.12 mV

R 1.12 mV

45° R 1.6 mV

45° L 1.6 mV

These are better than those for the prototypes.

Compliance: Lat. 8.8×10^{-6} cm/dyne

Vert. 1.9×10^{-6} cm/dyne

The following measurements in db represents the total output for the input at the various frequencies. It therefore includes surface noise, motor noise and the rest and not merely the output at the voltage specified. For this reason, we estimate that the true X-talk figures at the specified voltages may be some 6 db better than that shown at some frequencies. We propose to check this by insertion of filters. But it is a tricky business. It must also be realised that X-talk is likely to vary within a few db from pickup to pickup.

Frequency Response: 45/45

c/s	40	60	125	250	500	1k
Left db	+1.9	+0.6	+0.3	+0.2	0	0
X-talk db	-10	-13	-15	-18	-20	-20
Right db	+2.9	+1.5	+0.7	+0.3	+0.5	0
X-talk db	-11	-13	-11	-10	-19	-18

c/s	2k	4k	6k	8k	10k	12k
Left db	0	-0.9	-1.1	-0.8	-0.2	+0.5
X-talk db	-15	-11	-10	-10	-8	-11
Right db	0	-1	-1.2	-1.5	-1.4	+0.3
X-talk db	-17	-13	-11	-10	-11	-10

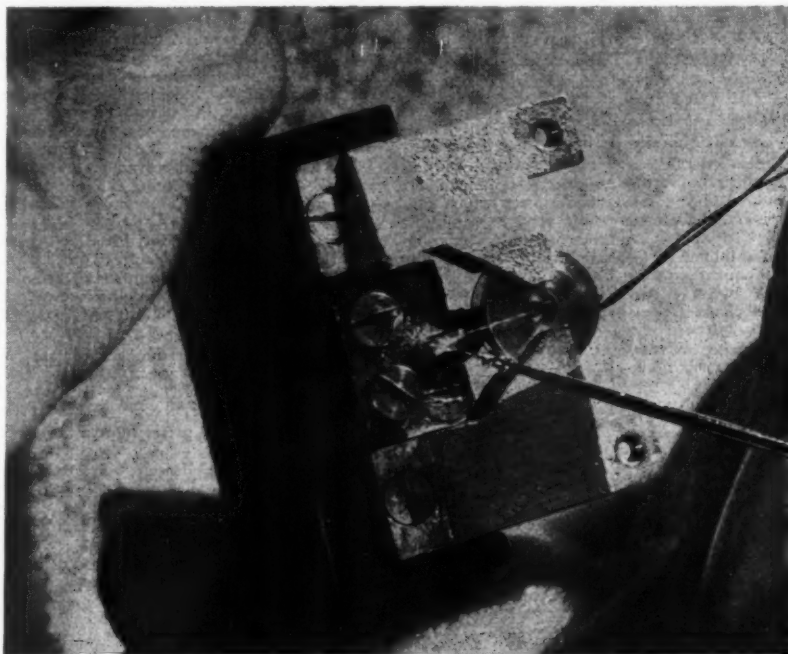
Frequency Response: Monophonic

c/s	30	40	50	60	80	100
Yellow db	+2.1	+1.9	+1	+0.8	+0.4	+0.3

c/s	150	200	300	500	700	1k
Yellow db	+0.3	0	0	0	0	0

c/s	2k	3k	4k	5k	6k	7k
Yellow db	-0.5	-0.7	-0.7	-1.2	-1.5	-1.4

c/s	8k	10k	12k	14k	16k	18k
Yellow db	-1.3	-1.5	-1	-0.5	0	-0.5



A partially assembled head. Cementing the Terylene thread to the rubber block.

(Decca Photos.)

Whilst the frequency measurements were being made (on a valve voltmeter) the waveform was under observation on an oscilloscope. A little second harmonic distortion showed up at 8/9 kc/s and some third harmonic at 10 kc/s. The voltage measurements (which, as noted, were of total output) at these frequencies show that the distortion was not serious but was rather a testimony to the long range of frequency response above 20 kc/s. If the response had cut off below 20 kc/s (as it does with most stereo cartridges) the harmonics would not have affected the trace on the oscilloscope!

So much, then, for our measurements. The exercise has taught us quite a lot about pickup technique. But it has also confirmed us in the view we formed from our listening tests: that on present facts this Decca cartridge is the *ne plus ultra* of stereo cartridges. P.W.

S.T.D. "Orthotone" Stereo High Fidelity System. Price: Control Unit, 19 gns. Amplifier, 28 gns. Scientific and Technical Developments Ltd., Melbourne Works, Melbourne Road, Wallington, Surrey.

Makers' Specification: Control Unit—STD399.

Switched Inputs: Twin for p.u. to R.I.A.A. characteristic (10 mv, for 200 mv out); Tape and Radio (120 mv), single channel for 78s, pre-set sensitivity controls for each input.

Controls: Function Switch (Stereo, Stereo Reverse and Single Channel); Bass (± 14 db at 50 c/s); Treble (± 12 db at 20 kc/s); Balance.

Power requirement: 5 ma at 300 v, and 1.2 amp at 6.3 v.

Finish: Anodised and engraved metal control knobs. Panel and case in Champagne Gilt.

Dimensions: Panel 12 in. by 5 in. Unit 7 in. deep overall including cable plugs and control knobs.

Power Amplifier—STD381.

Power Output: 10 watts (± 1 db) for 0.1 per cent total distortion at 1 kc (per channel).

Input: For specified output—200 mv.

Feedback: 26 db.

Hum and Noise: —76 db.

Damping Factor: 20.

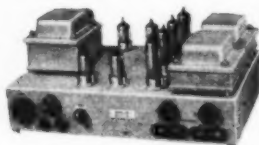
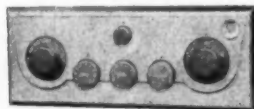
Power for Pre-amp: 300 v at 5 ma and 6.3 v at 1.2 a.

Output impedance: 4, 8 and 16 ohms.

Overall dimensions: 11 in. by 13 in. by 6½ in.

The 381 consists of two ten-watt push-pull amplifiers of orthodox design, symmetrically laid out on a substantial chassis which also holds the common power supply: sufficient spare power is available for the companion pre-amplifier. Construction is rugged, the components are the best available, the wiring and soldering excellent. Performance from each channel was so nearly identical that the best results are only given for one channel.

Frequency response at 1 watt level: ± 0.5 db from 15 c/s to 50 kc/s.



Power Frequency response:

Frequency (c/s)	20	30	40	60	100	200
Power (watts)	7.5	8	8	9	9	10

Frequency (c/s)	10k	15k	20k
Power (watts)	10	9	9

Hum and noise: 80 db below 10 watts.

Crosstalk: Negligible at all frequencies.

Stability: This was not as high as I would like although adequate for general use. My unit was a prototype and the makers have stated that production models will be considerably better.

The 399 control unit follows the same style as the combined stereo 444 I described last December. Purposeful but elegant design makes it a pleasure to use. The facilities it offers are well described in the Specification, but I would draw attention to the neat adjustment of level for each input connection on both channels, the clear indication given by all the controls and the ease with which the unit can be installed in a cabinet. Once again construction is good and the layout very accessible.

Here are the figures obtained from my tests which were taken from the stated input to the speaker terminals, i.e. they include the 381 amplifier.

Frequency response: Radio input. Controls at level. ± 1 db from 30 c/s to 15 kc/s (a fall of 3 db at 15 kc/s occurs at the mid position of the volume control and is traceable to the lead capacity between control unit and main amplifier). Gram input. R.I.A.A. position.

The R.I.A.A. response was checked and was within ± 1 db from 15 kc/s down to 80 c/s: it was 3 db low at 50 c/s (this is due to the feedback being a little low over the equalisation stage and is to be put right in production).

Tone controls: The range of the bass control at 50 c/s was $+14$ db to -20 db; of the treble control at 20 kc/s $+13$ db to -24 db.

Crosstalk: was better than 30 db between 30 c/s and 15 kc/s.

Balance: better than 2 db at all control settings.

These two units form a nicely balanced pair for the person who requires complete stereo facilities of better than average performance and construction. At just under £50 they are little dearer than a first-class single-channel equipment of equivalent total power. Having used them I have only two small criticisms: firstly I would have liked to have a filter of some sort to deal with the "edginess" of some recordings and secondly the output of a few of the high-class stereo pickups is so low that the amplification provided is barely sufficient. (This has now been improved on production models—the sensitivity being 3.5 mv for 200 mv out).

G.E.H.

S.T.D. "Orthotone" High Fidelity Amplifier Units. Price: Control Unit, 19 gns., Amplifier, 24 gns. Scientific and Technical Developments Ltd., Melbourne Works, Melbourne Road, Wallington, Surrey.

Makers' Specification: Control Unit—STD448.

Switched Inputs: Microphone (5 mv for 160 mv out); Tape (40 mv); Radio (40 mv); p.u., R.I.A.A., LP and 78 (10 mv).

Sensitivity Controls: preset at rear for Radio and p.u.

Output: Cathode Follower.

Filters: Low pass, push-button operated, for 5, 7 and 9 kc/s. Variable slope control 10-40 db per octave.

Controls: Bass ($+16$ db at 30 c/s); Treble ($+18$ db at 20 kc/s).

Finish and Dimensions: as for STD399.

Power Amplifier—STD373.

Power Output: 25 watts for 0.1 per cent total distortion at 1 kc/s.

Input: For specified output—160 mv.

Feedback: 28 db.

Hum and Noise: —76 db.

Damping Factor: 30.

Power for Pre-amp: 450 v at 10 ma and 6.3 v at 6.0 amp.

Output impedance: 4, 8 and 16 ohms.

Overall dimensions: 11 in. by 10½ in. by 6½ in.

This is the "prestige model" of the S.T.D. range, a single channel control unit and main amplifier with an impressive specification.

My previous remarks regarding the acceptability of the styling and the excellence of the construction of S.T.D. equipment must be reinforced here by a reference to the very great attention to detail that ensure versatility in use and setting up. The pre-amplifier contains its own power supply and has two mains outlets to feed motor, tuner or tape unit. The cathode follower output means that it can be placed at a considerable distance from the more bulky main amplifier. Tape unit connections are available at the back for a built-in installation, or as jacks on the panel for a portable machine. There are pre-set level controls on radio and gram. inputs and provision for a microphone transformer and balanced input socket if wanted (I think this is the only unit I have seen with this facility.)

The main amplifier is also provided with A.C. outlets. Mains voltage and output impedance are set by rotating their respective 3-position plugs. A socket provides H.T. and L.T. for alternative non-self-powered pre-amplifiers (possibly the stereo 399 when high power is required). Fuses are readily accessible.

The performance, both on paper and to the expert ear is excellent. This is a fairly expensive equipment, but it is one of which anyone, not least its makers, can be proud. I suppose no reviewer worth his salt can ever be completely satisfied, so I mention that a few pickups of very low output will not load up the amplifier fully, that I would like to see a better selector switch with shorting rings to avoid break-through, that a bottom cover is desirable on the main amplifier and that I distrust (perhaps wrongly) the reliability of the connection given by the impedance adjustment.

That said, all else is praise. Here are the test figures:

Main Amplifier.

Frequency response: at 1 watt level ± 1 db 15 c/s to 50 Kc/s.

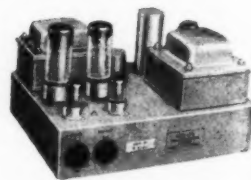
Power Frequency response:

Frequency (c/s)	20	30	40	60	12k	14k	16k	20k
Power (watts)	7	20	23	32	32	25	22	17

Stability: Very good. 0.5 m.f.d. across 15 ohms or .05 m.f.d. pure capacity were required to provide oscillation. Square wave tests showed little trace of ringing until these values were approached.

Control unit.

Frequency response: Radio input, Filter out. Tone controls at level. ± 2 db 15 c/s to 20 kc/s. (a slight fall in treble—advancing the treble



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This remarkable high-precision product has undoubtedly been generally accepted as the finest pick-up obtainable today for both stereo and mono records

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"More important, however, than any laboratory test is the listening test. Reproduction from the new stereo discs is a revelation . . . not only is the high frequency response there, but it is maintained . . . when high frequency transients are normally lost due to the stylus losing contact with the groove walls for much of the time.

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these figures

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...and these features

Something really worthwhile has been achieved in the design of this fine new tape recorder. Performance of a high order has been married to a range of features, many of them exclusive to Simon, enormously increasing its value to the connoisseur of recorded sound.

Never before have all these been brought together in a portable tape recorder—3-way mixing, lift and cut on bass and treble, a monitor with separate bass and treble units giving you high quality sound without a separate loudspeaker and, to match the superb 10-watt ultra-linear amplifier, the Simon all push-button, automatic tape deck.

Automatic, in the Simon sense, is meant to be taken literally: it means continuous replay—the machine stops, reverses and changes to the other track with only a two-second pause, and with no necessity to touch any control. Similarly, up to three hours continuous recording can be made without attention, the machine automatically stopping at the end of the second track.

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SIMON AUTOMATIC DECK fully 'push-button-controlled'

AUTOMATIC TAPE REVERSAL without touching controls

3-WAY MIXING FACILITIES on both record and playback

BASS AND TREBLE LIFT AND CUT with independent controls

REMOTE CONTROL FACILITIES on both record and playback

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4

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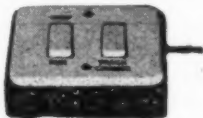


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control to ± 1 corrected response to ± 0.5 db in the above range).

Controls: Bass at 30 c/s — 21 to ± 19 db. Treble at 20 k/s — 24 to ± 14 db.

Filter: Frequencies and slopes as specification.

The R.I.A.A. curve was checked and was within ± 1 db from 15 k/s to 100 c/s (see note in report on 399 above).

Footnote.

In this and the November and December issues I have reported on four sets of equipment by S.T.D. I was surprised to learn that the decision to enter the domestic high fidelity market, the design, development and construction of prototypes took but six months. In discussing the prototypes with their design team after preparing these reports I found that they made no attempt to convince me on the virtues of the equipment, but rather to take up the attitude of, "Do you think it good enough and how can we make it better?" Very refreshing!

S.T.D. also offer a cabinet designed to house their own or other similarly dimensioned amplifiers. This achieves solidity and accessibility through clever design and although of necessity quite large, is not in the least clumsy. At £21 14s. (with legs) it is acceptable in most homes. A double width version at £28 will hold a tape unit and tuner in addition to the amplifier, control unit and full-size turntable board. G.E.H.

Stereo Demonstration Records

With "Adventures in Stereo" Brunswick have usefully added to the growing library of demonstration records. First there is a short and sensible talk of American origin then after the talk no stereo swimming-pools or trains or ping-pong, but nothing more hurtful than a couple of seagulls to introduce a varied programme of music: Alfred Newman in Hawaiian guise, Mario Escudero in Flamenco, Tommy Dorsey in boogie-woogie, the Concert-Masters of New York in a Paganini string arrangement, and Sammy Davis in *The Song and Dance Man*—an act so perfectly catching an antique style, with no suggestion of parody, that it will bring nostalgic tears to the eyes of anyone whose heart is in the music-hall. Its reverse side follows the identical pattern, but with alternative music: another spoken introduction leads to Lionel Newman in some martial film title music, Wayne King in a waltz ("tilting" alto sax solo says the sleeve, euphemistically), the Sal Salvador Quartet in some jazz, Mishel Piastro in an arrangement of the Mozart *Turkish March*, the Lawson-Haggart band in some rock, and Felicia Sanders climaxing well with *Music Maestro Please*. The recording everywhere is very good—full, brilliant, and with plenty of spatial effect. (Brunswick 12 in. LP STA3004—27s. plus 10s. 6d. P.T.).

Vox VST1, a "Stereovox Sampler", is unfortunately much less successful. A few bars of the finale of the *New World* symphony lead disastrously badly to a vocal quartet announcing "S-T-E-R-E-O: STEREO!", followed by applause from the handful of boys and girls in the studio. The effect is terrible. After breaking the sound barrier the disc then embarks on ill-balanced recordings of excerpts from *Peer Gynt* and *Russian and Ludmilla* (the oboe far too prominent), a Vivaldi bassoon concerto movement (much better recorded but at a quite different level), some pop-style piano and strings, and finally a sadly anticlimactic race-track. The second side of the disc offers moderately satisfactory but not pluperfect versions of three *Bartok* Bride dances; for such a sampler disc, pluperfect would have been better (Vox 12 in. LP VST1—21s. 3d. plus 8s. 3d. P.T.).

DELETIONS—E.M.I.

COMPILED By F. F. CLOUGH & G. J. CUMING

The 1959 Deletions List from the E.M.I. combine should be regarded by all long-standing collectors as the end of an era. Although in France, Germany and elsewhere, the local branches ceased some time ago to manufacture 78 r.p.m. records (apparently even "pops"), it is only now that we find the same inexorable process leading to the wholesale deletion from the English catalogues of the remaining vestiges of the 78 r.p.m. repertory. Only a few exceptions now remain among classical recordings at this speed, as unfortunately the deadline for this withdrawal was fixed at **31st January 1959**, and so we had insufficient notice to give readers advance details of all the withdrawals. Even among the "pop" repertory, there are long lists of 78 r.p.m. withdrawals, but the 10-inch cheaper labels are reprieved until **31st March 1959**, enabling readers so inclined to arrange a few rescues. There are a few discs in the H.M.V. B series and the parallel Columbia DB series, which remain current until the end of the month, which may interest some collectors: for example, the Gerald Moore recording of excerpts from Bartók's *For Children*, a rare example of his solo artistry; the 10-inch Columbia *Voice of Poetry* series; and various odd light vocal records (e.g. Webster Booth, Paul Robeson, Jean Sablon, Joan Hammond) and choral items by the Glasgow Orpheus Choir and so on. There is in both these 10-inch series a small selection of discs not marked for deletion, largely of Folk Dance and similar material, but also a few "educational" records, including the whole of the *Columbia History of Music*. As the shortest procedure to inform interested readers, we append a note of the items in these and other series which are not being deleted—this list is not exhaustive, as there are more deletions in the "pop" and jazz fields, but it will enable a process of elimination to be applied with some success. It is remarkable to note that Robert Wilson and Josef Locke score highest marks among vocalists on H.M.V. and Columbia respectively for the quantity of retained records.

The 12-inch classical 78 has now almost become extinct, and unfortunately without advance notice for the nostalgically minded. Considering the almost complete change in public outlook towards the microgroove record during the last few years, the list of 78s which have survived until now is surprisingly long, and what memories are conjured up by a look through the list! Many famous names of the inter-war years are there, and a good number of post-war issues, with a sprinkling of records which have been familiar to us since our earlier days. It is sad to see the records of artists of the stature of Elisabeth Schumann, Sheridan, Pertile, Gobbi, Björling, Chaliapin, Austral, Melchior, Paderewski and others, disappearing—not only their 12-inch discs, of course, but also all the 10-inch DA series, except the few "Royal" records; so we lose, for example, Kipnis' famous Mozart disc (DA1218) and Elisabeth Schumann's lovely Cradle Song from Smetana's *The Kiss* (DA1544)—not even the new issue of the complete opera can replace this. A number of these may eventually see re-issue in microgroove form, as some have already; but many of the old favourite DAs and DBs must have gone for ever. Ernest Lough, the original issue of whose recording has now gone after a run of 30 years, and some Webster Booths, Harry Lauders and Noël Cowards have already been re-issued, but many other familiar names from the concert halls and theatres of the inter-war years will hence-

forth be missing from the catalogues: Mark Hambourg, Mavis Bennett, Arthur Meale, Stuart Robertson, and many more whose records were the familiar items in these columns twenty or thirty years ago.

Musically, there is not much important material which disappears entirely from the repertory. Ireland's *Mai Dun* is included in the deletions lists, but in fact it probably went before, as it is not in the current catalogue; Parry's *Blest Pair of Sirens* on C3820/1 seems to be the only major loss, though Quilter's *Children's Overture*, Walton conducting his own *Wise Virgins* (after Bach), the examples of the conducting of Hamilton Harty and Constant Lambert and some Elgar recordings will be missed, and some of the "Opera in English" items may be hard to replace, though re-issues are reasonably likely; and the Henry Wood *Fantasia on Sea Songs* and Aubrey Brain's Mozart Horn Concerto are also probable candidates for eventual re-issue.

The exceptions to the wholesale deletion of classical 78s are very few: the automatic couplings of Toscanini's Beethoven Sixth with the B.B.C. Orchestra and Cantelli's *Romeo and Juliet Overture* are not on the list, but as they are now re-issued on LP, this seems an odd exception and may be inadvertent? Other H.M.V. 12-inch reprieves are the *Instruments of the Orchestra* (C3619/22), the Scouts' Jubilee record (C4278) and a Square Dance Band (C4254); all the Royal records (10- and 12-inch), including the Coronation records (RG series), and of course the *History of Music in Sound* 78s. On Columbia, the only reprieves (other than the DBs already mentioned) are the Church Music series (LB91/5, 132/3, 147/8; LX1283 9, 1379/90, 1563/72, 1604/13). One notable departure here is Eva Turner (D1631), but there are also a number of Lipatti, Seefried, Schwarzkopf and of course Beecham recordings of some celebrity. On Parlophone all the remaining classical 78s have gone, which included Eileen Joyce, Supervia and Tauber; the lone Cetra re-issue (R30008) and its equivalent 45 (BSP3001) are singular in having an earlier withdrawal date (31st December 1958).

In view of modern developments, we can accept the virtual demise of the classical 78 as a sign of progress, but there is also in the same lists a certain number of microgroove deletions; these do not take effect until **31st March 1959**, so that here collectors have a chance to secure what they require. The only LPs listed are Capitols, from among those taken over with unchanged numbers on the transfer of the label from Decca. These are listed in summary form below; as usual we have marked the unique titles with fin the list, and these are worth investigation, even though most of these discs date from the earlier period of American LP recording and need considerable tonal correction for satisfactory results. A curiosity is the Britten transcription for *Les Sylphides*; it may not be Chopin, but it is interesting. It is surprising, in view of their frequent appearance in recital programmes, to find that there will be no current recording of the Arensky *Tchaikovsky Variations* after the end of this month; the Tchaikovsky/Borodin Quartet coupling may interest some also despite the new recording of the former, while the more contemporary-minded may be more interested in the Milhaud.

The 45 r.p.m. list is notable for the disappearance of all the dearer category of classical "standard-play" discs, some of which are early transfers from 78s which still remained

current until the present list. (Some of the 7P series remain available.) If you have missed a 78 you wanted, therefore, you may be able to get the equivalent 45 instead. Both among these, and in the extended-play section, readers may find the odd item they would like to preserve—for example, the Lipatti recording of Liszt and Ravel, Flagstad's Grieg songs (only one of which is so far duplicated for Decca), especially 7EB 6007 with Gerald Moore; Beecham's R. Strauss items, Schwarzkopf in Verdi and Puccini, or the Constant Lambert versions of Waldteufel in this convenient form. Two Christoff recordings of Moussorgsky songs might interest those who sigh for the expensive complete set, and Gigli's 7R127 is one of his last English studio recordings. Both versions of Mendelssohn's *Son & Stranger* overture are going, and oddly enough, there seems to be no other version of Josef Strauss' *Transaktionen* after SEL1505 has gone. The nature of the present lists has made it hardly appropriate to prepare our usual classified list under composers, and so the records are listed roughly numerically below; fuller details may be obtained from the catalogues. Where the same recording will remain available after the present withdrawals at a different speed or in a different form, the title is marked §.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE

The following 45 r.p.m. records are to be deleted as from 31st March, 1959.

Extended Play discs

7EB6006—M. de Monaco (Marta; Amico Fritz; Adriana Lecouvreur; Andrea Chénier)

7EB6007—K. Flagstad (†Four Grieg songs; with G. Moore)

7EB6011—K. Flagstad (Grieg: †Springtide; Monte Plinio; with orch.)

7EB6012—K. Flagstad (Brahms: Songs with viola, and G. Moore)

7EP7004—†MENDELSSOHN: *Son & Stranger*, Overture
ADAM: Si j'étais roi, Overture

7EP7007—VERDI: *Forza del destino*, Overture
VERDI: *Louisa Miller*, Overture

7EP7011—†TARTINI: *Andante* and *Presto*
†LOCH: *Baal Shem—No. 2*, Nigun

7EP7013—†PAGANINI: *Caprice No. 24*
†BARTOK: *Rumanian Dances*

7EP7015—AUBER: *Masaniello*, Overture
†LISZT: *Hung. Rhapsody 6*

7ER5007—†Prince Igor—Kochanska's Aria
Khovanschina—Dositheus' Aria

7ER5014—R. STRAUSS: *Fuehrer!—Love Scene*
Bourgeois Gentilhomme—Minuet

†Intermezzo—Entr'acte
RPO—Beecham

7ER5031—Lohengrin—Narration & Farewell
R. Schock

Standard Playing discs

The whole of the 7m series of "pops"; but only the following in the 7P series go:

7P102—MEYERBEER—LAMBERT: *Patineurs*, excerpts
Sedler's Wells Orch.—Lambert

7P121—KREISLER: *Praeludium & Allegro*
KROLL: *Banjo and fiddle* I. Haendel, G. Moore

7P123—BACH: *Prel. & fugue, C. mi.* (WTC2)
COUPERIN: *Carillon de Cythère* Solomon

7P135, 149—Melachrinio Orch.

7P144—SCHUBERT: *Rosamunde* excerpts
LPO—Cameron

7R105—Neapolitan Songs
Gigli

7R107—Barbieri—Largo al factotum
Otello—Era la notte T. Gobbi

7R112—BACH: *Suite in D ma.*—Air
Violin Sonata 6—Prelude Menuhin

7R115—Traviata—Addio del passato
Bohéme—Si, mi chiamano Mimì M. Carosio

7R116—Arlesiana—E la solita storia
Tosca—E lucevan... G. di Stefano

7R121—SCHUBERT: *Rosamunde* excerpts
Vienna Phil.

7R127—†Elisir d'amore—Quanto è bella
†Turandot—Nessun dorma Gigli

7R132—Tannhäuser—Elisabeth's Greeting
Lohengrin—Elsa's Dream V. de los Angeles

7R134—†TCHAIKOVSKY: *Serenade—Waltz*
†J. & J. STRAUSS: *Pizzicato Polka*

7R141—Walküre—Ride
Meistersinger—Dance of Apprentices

Vienna Phil.—Furtwängler

7R143—MOUSSORGSKY: *Song of the flea*
Song of the Volga boatmen B. Christoff

7R150—Sadko—Viking Guest's song
Prince Igor—Galitsky's aria Christoff

7R152—†PAGLIACCI—Vesti la giubba; Pagliaccio, mio
marito Gigli & Pacetti

7R154—Traviata—Di Provenza
Rigoletto—Parli siamo T. Gobbi

7R156—MOZART: §Clemenza di Tito, Overture
§Così fan tutte, Overture

Philharmonia—Kubelik

7R158—Cav. Rusticana—Intermezzo
Pagliacci—Intermezzo Dresden—Böhm

7R161—MOUSSORGSKY: *The Grave*
†Siberian prisoner's song Christoff, Moore

7R162—CHOPIN: *Nocturnes 4 & 7*
A. Cortot

7R163—Faust—King of Thule; Jewel song
V. de los Angeles

7R164—Orfeo—Che farò...
Dido and Aeneas—When I am laid in earth

K. Flagstad

7R165—Pagliacci—Prologue
T. Gobbi

7R166—Faust—King of Thule; Jewel song J. Hammond

7R171—Forza del destino—Uma fatale
Otello—Credo T. Gobbi

7R172—†La Wally—Ebben? Ne andrò lontana
Aida—O patria mia! J. Hammond

7R175—†Lohengrin—Intro. Act III & Bridal Chorus
N.W.D.R. Orch. & Cho.—Schüchter

7R176—DVORAK: *Songs my mother taught me*
SCHUBERT: *Ave Maria* Menuhin, Moore

The following records of the B 10-inch 78 r.p.m. series are NOT deleted:

Folk and Country Dances: B2707/11, 4445, 8684/7,
8838/40, 9279, 9480, 9943, 10044/5, 10013/4, 10301/4,
10715/6, 10804/5, 10931/3, 10955/6, 10963/4, 10967/8

Paul Robeson: B4309, 8497, 8731, 8890

R. Wilson: B907, 9736, 9864, 10249, 10401, 10433,
10521, 10780, 10820

B.B.C. Symphony Orch.: B3553 (God save the Queen,
etc.)

Dame Myra Hess: B9035 (Jesu, joy, etc.)

Westminster Abbey Choir: B9615

Melachrinio Orch.: B9687, 9765, 10958

Glasgow Orpheus Choir: B9697

S. Phillips Band: B9940, 10015

Terry (Irish Songs): B10008

Music for Movement: B10125/8 (Jacques Orch.)

Max Bygraves: B10250

Semprini Orch.: B10295

Philharmonia Orch. & Cho.: B10484 (God save the
Queen, arr. Elgar)

Eton College Musical Society: B10485

Deep River Boys: B10832

Tunes for Children: B10858/61 (Instrumental Ens.)

R.A.F. Band: B10877 (Dambusters, etc.), 10957

Searchlight Tattoos: B10937, 10992

Royal Marines' Band: B10938

Music for Percussion Band: 10044/51

Nursery Rhymes: B10965/6

All other records in this series will be withdrawn on
March 31st, as will all records in the BD series.

COLUMBIA

The following 45 r.p.m. records are to be deleted
as from March 31st:

Extended Play discs

SEB3501—D. Lipatti (Ravel & Liszt)

SEB3502—L. Infantino (Canzone)

SEB3505—E. Kunz (Viennese songs)

Philharmonia Orchestra:

SED5501—†HANDEL: *Samson*, Overture

†SUPPE: *Light Cavalry*, Overture Weldon

SED5504—SUPPE: *Morning, Noon and Night*, Ov.

†WALDTEUFEL: *Sur la plage* (C. Lambert)

SED5506—SUPPE: *Pique Dame*, Overture

†WALDTEUFEL: *Estudiantina* (C. Lambert)

SED5510—DEBUSSY: *Nauges; Fêtes* (Galliera)

SEL1502—†BERLIOZ: *Beatrice & Benedict*, Ov.

†SCHUBERT: *Rosamunde*, Ballet G ma. (Kletzki)

SEL1506—†WALTON: *Orb & Sceptre*; *Portsmouth*
Point (cond. Walton)

SEL1525—MENDELSSOHN: †Son & Stranger, Ov.
Ruy Blas, Ov. (Kletzki)

SEL1505—Joa. STRAUSS: *Sphärenklänge; †Trans-*
aktionen Vienna Phil.—Karajan

SEG7535—O. Natke—Sea shanties

SEG7592—J. Locke—Encores.

Standard Play discs

SCM series: the whole series (102, 113, Schwarzkopf;
SCB series: the whole series (102, 113, Schwarzkopf;
104, Malczynski; 107, Silveri; 108, Gieseking; 109,
112, 116, Karajan; 1115, Sargent; 1117, Anda; 1118,
Gedda)

SCD2039—†VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: *The Wasps*,
excerpts LSO—Weldon

SCD2043/7—H. Davidson Orch. (G. & S. Selections)

SCD2008/10—Variety artists.

The following records of the DB 10-inch 78 r.p.m. series are NOT deleted (only numbers under 3200 are specified; there are others remaining available over that point, but all are "pops").

Folk and Country Dances: no prefix: 5434, 5504, 5733,
5734; DB476, 569, 1359, 1653/5, 1798/9, 2246, 2251,
2259 (also 3743, 3782)

Columbia History of Music: The whole series.
Carols: DB1451.

Joan Hammond: DB2052

J. Locke: DB2336, 2351, 2447, 2514, 2541

S. MacEwan: DB3120

N. Wisdom: DB3133, 3161

Dance, etc.: DB2583, 2669, 2809, 3051, 3141

All other records below 3200 are deleted, as are all the
FB series.

PARLOPHONE. For deletion on March 31st, 1959:

45 r.p.m.: BSP, MSP: The whole series

A few of the GEP series (all "pops")

78 r.p.m.: 10-inch series:

The whole of the F series (under 3000).

Only a few of the Scottish F series (over 3000).

The following R series below 4000 are NOT deleted:
R3243, 3255, 3898, 3423, 3436, 3485, 3575, 3514,
3612 (Ustinov), 3799, 3927 (Salad Days).

Over 4000, a large number are also deleted, in many
cases along with their 45 r.p.m. equivalents.

M.G.M.: There is a large list of deletions, but few are of
great interest.

CAPITOL

The following LP records are to be deleted on
March 31st, 1959:

CCL7508—†TCHAIKOVSKY: *Nutcracker Suite*
French Nat. Sym.—Desormière

CCL7509—RAVEL: *Intro. & Allegro*, Hollywood Ens.

DEBUSSY: *Dances*, Stockton, Concert Arts

CCL7510—†CHOPIN—BRITTEN: *Les Sylphides*
Ballet Th.—Levine

CCL7520—SHOSTAKOVICH: *Concerto*, pt., tpt. & str.

V. Aller, M. Klein, Concert Arts—Slatkin

CTL7018—GLAZUNOV: *The Seasons*
Fr. Nat.—Desormière

CTL7022—†ARENISKY: *Tchaikovsky Var.*, Op. 35a

GRIEG: *Holberg Suite*, Byrns Cha. Orch.

CTL7023—BEETHOVEN: *Symph. No. 6, "Pastoral"*
Pittsburgh Sym.—Steinberg

CTL7031—BORODIN: *String Quartet No. 2*
TCHAIKOVSKY: *Sitt. Qtr. No. 1*

CTL7045—FRANCK: *Pf. Quintet*, F minor
Hollywood Qt.

CTL7073—S. FOSTER: *Songs*, R. Wagner Chorale

CTL7094—†MILHAUD: *Concerto for percussion*
CHAVEZ: *Toccata*, Concert Arts—Slatkin

BARTOK: *Music for Str.*, perc. & celeste
Los Angeles—Byrns

CTL7096—RAVEL: *Intro. & Allegro*, Debussy

DEBUSSY: *Dances* (as CCL7509, above)

SCHOENBERG: *Verklärte Nacht*
Hollywood Ensemble

CTL7101—BIZET: *L'Arlesienne*, Suites (excerpts)

FAURE: *Pelleas et Mélisande*, Suite
Paris Opera—La Conté

Also: LC6676, 6691; LC6808, 6816; LCT6017; T741,
751, 805; and a list of 78 and 45 r.p.m. discs.

BOOK REVIEWS

Audio Design Handbook. H. A. Hartley.
Gernsback Library, No. 71.

Before the last war comparatively few people were interested in what has now become known as high fidelity. To them the name Hartley (coupled with that of the late P. K. Turner) needs little introduction. As one of the handful of companies who produced equipment built to a standard instead of a price, they produced many interesting designs of amplifiers, speakers and complete radiograms.

Now H. A. Hartley has assembled in this book a mass of information, the results of more than 30 years' work in this field.

Starting with the perception of sound he then carries the reader over the stony ground of amplifier design stage by stage: a technical journey, but avoiding as far as possible all mathematical diversions. Arriving at the loudspeaker and its enclosure he is in great form and it is obvious, as he states in his preface, that this chapter could easily grow to a whole volume. Reaching home with a review of the possible methods of test and measurement, liberally illustrated with drawings of oscilloscope waveforms, he then completes what he terms engineering writing and in a final chapter entitled "High fidelity—hail and farewell!" he brews a potent mixture of history, romance and prediction written in the first person. Many readers will cough and splutter over some of the ingredients and few will swallow the lot:

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Model 500

THE ONLY RECORDER IN THE WORLD POSSESSING ALL THESE FEATURES

- 3 heads, separate record and replay amplifiers, enabling instant comparison to be made between signal recorded on tape, and the input.
- Variable speed between 8 and $3\frac{1}{2}$ I.P.S.
- Stroboscope, lit by neon lamp, shows precise speeds of $7\frac{1}{2}$ and $3\frac{1}{2}$ I.P.S.
- Easy tape threading into a straight slot.
- Provision for conversion to stereo.
- Lever deck controls, providing variable speed wind forward and back from extra fast to inching for editing; sound available for editing if required; instant stop and start.
- Peak level recording meter; Push-button record-playback controls with record safety latch; Clock-type tape position indicator; 3 Garrard motors; 2 matched loudspeakers; Accommodates up to $8\frac{1}{2}$ " reels.
- 3 watts undistorted output; 2 input and 2 output sockets; plays total of 2 hours 8 minutes on two tracks at $7\frac{1}{2}$ I.P.S. or 4 hours 16 minutes at $3\frac{1}{2}$ I.P.S.
- Fitted with Bib tape splicer on deck, complete with reel of tape, spare reel, 2 screened jack plugs.

FOR THE TECHNICAL MAN—DIMENSIONS: 21" long x 14½" wide x 10½" high; Weight 50 lbs. FREQUENCY RESPONSE: ± 2 dB. 50—10,000 c/s; ± 3 dB. 45—12,000 c/s. OVERALL RESPONSE: Strictly to C.C.I.R. recommended specifications. SIGNAL TO NOISE RATIO: Better than -45 dB. (unweighted, including hum). OUTPUT FROM PLAYBACK PREAMPLIFIER: 200 mV. R.M.S. INPUTS TO RECORD AMPLIFIER (High Impedance): Microphone 1 mV.; Radio or pickup 50-200 mV. —for maximum record level. "WOW" AND "FLUTTER": Better than 0.2% R.M.S. As measured on the G.B.-Kalee Flutter Meter.

THE TECHNICAL EXPERTS' OPINION OF THE REFLECTOGRAPH

P. Wilson, M.A.,
"The Gramophone"

This is without doubt the most versatile domestic tape recorder that I have had the pleasure of trying out, and the quality, both of its recording and its playback, is of exceptionally high standard. For quality of performance, then, I give the instrument full marks: I know of no better. For the construction I have nothing but praise. There is nothing flimsy about it either as a piece of mechanism or on the electronic side. It is a fine piece of engineering up to the highest British standards.

D. W. Aldous,
M.Inst.E., M.B.K.S.

"The Gramophone Record Review"

The separate record and replay amplifiers make possible the direct monitoring from the tape during the actual recording and this facility is certainly a boon. There is no doubt whatever that when one has used this type of recorder one never wishes to return to the combined record/playback type of instrument. I have never heard better quality at 7½ in.p.s. any tape recorder that has passed through

my hands. The "Reflectograph" is a pedigree tape recorder of immaculate construction and impeccable performance.

James Moir, "Hi-Fi News"

Separate motors are used for capstan drive and both spools, all three motors being of Garrard manufacture. The overall impression after some months of use is that the machine is convenient and pleasant to handle while the extra facilities make it very suitable for professional use.

Reflectograph Unique Guarantee

One year's free service including valves. Service usually undertaken on your own premises within twenty-four hours notice by factory trained engineers of E.M.I. Company. After the first year—up to twenty years—for a small annual fee a fully comprehensive maintenance contract is available.

To maintain consistent deliveries Reflectographs are at present available from a limited number of retailers, which include those shown below.

If you are not conveniently situated to any of these retailers please write to Multimusic Limited, Hemel Hempstead, Herts., giving the name and address of your usual retailer.

LONDON

W.1 Executive Cameras Ltd.; His Master's Voice Showrooms; John Lewis & Co. Ltd.; Period High Fidelity Ltd.; Webb's Radio.
W.2 Thomas Heintz; Sound Tape Vision Ltd.; Tele-Radio (1943) Ltd.; Teletape.
W.C.1 Alfred Imhof Ltd.; Lark & Sons (London) Ltd.
W.C.2 Bishop Sound & Electrical Co. Ltd.; Modern Electronics Ltd.
S.W.1 Dickinsons of Pall Mall Ltd.; Harrods Limited; Peter Jones Ltd.
S.W.9 Hensler Bros. Ltd.
S.W.16 Francis of Streatham.
E.10 Stanwood Radio Ltd.
E.12 Saxby's.
E.C.4 City Sale & Exchange Ltd.
N.4 Sypha Sound Sales Ltd.
N.13 Jones & Adams Ltd.
N.W.5 Quality Mart.
ABERDEEN James Scott & Co.
ALDERSHOT Tingleys Ltd.
BELFAST Radio 36 of Gresham St.
BEXLEYHEATH Broadway Radio.
BIRMINGHAM 1 Jewkes & Co. Ltd.
BIRMINGHAM 14 Millar Thomson.
BIRMINGHAM 2 Walker Bros. (Electrical Engineers) Ltd.
BOLTON Harker & Howarth.
BEDFORD Bannister & House.
BRISTOL 1 Audio-Bristol.
BROMLEY Howard Photographic.

BURY ST. EDMUNDS Leasons Photographic Ltd.
CAMBRIDGE H. W. Peak Ltd.; G. P. Reese.
CANTERBURY Gouldens.
CARDIFF City Radio (Cardiff) Ltd.; James Howell & Co. Ltd.
CARLISLE Misons.
CHANNEL ISLANDS Regent Radio Ltd.
COLESHILL A. H. Peckmore & Co.
COVENTRY R.E.S. (Coventry) Ltd.
CROYDON Classic Electrical Co. Ltd.
DERBY Victor Buckland Ltd.; Hurst & Wallis Ltd.
EDINBURGH A. R. Bolton & Co.
FARNHAM The Record Shop.
GLASGOW, G.2 Alexander Biggar Ltd.; McCormack Ltd.
FAVERSHAM J. T. Skinner.
GT. YARMOUTH Norfolk Radio Service Co. Ltd.
GUILDFORD Soundcraft.
HALIFAX Trevor Fawthrop.
HARROGATE Vallance & Davison Ltd.
HAYES (MIDDLESEX) Rowley's.
HUDDERSFIELD Laurs (Film Services) Ltd.
ILFORD Ilford Music Shop Ltd.
KIDDERMINSTER F. W. Long.
LEEDS 1 Beckett Film Services Ltd.; Vallance & Davison Ltd.
LEIGH John Shinn & Sons Ltd.
LIVERPOOL 1 Beaver Radio (L'pool) Ltd.
LUTON Luton Typewriters & Office Supplies Ltd.
MAIDSTONE High Fidelity Ltd.
MANCHESTER Record Rendezvous.

MANCHESTER 3 High Fidelity Developments Ltd.

MANCHESTER 14 Dixon's Electronics.
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE 1 Northern Sound Services Ltd.; Payne & Hornsby Ltd.
NORWICH Tumilty Electric Ltd.
NOTTINGHAM Don Briggs Kinescope Service Ltd.; C. Gilbert Ltd.
OSWESTRY Power's Radio Ltd.
OXFORD G. Horn & Son; L. Westwood.
PAIGNTON Robert Whitnall & Co. (Paignton) Ltd.
PLYMOUTH H. Jones & Co. (Plymouth) Ltd.
POOLE R. P. Barfoot.
READING Barnes & Avis Ltd.; Hickie & Hickie Ltd.
RHYL Battys (Rhyl) Ltd.
RICHMOND Musicraft Hi-Fi Centre.
ROMFORD A. H. Silcocks & Son Ltd.; T. & B. Photographic Co.
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SALISBURY J. F. Sutton.
SHEFFIELD 7 D. W. Roberts.
SHEFFIELD 6 E. Spooner & Son.
SOUTHALL Musicraft Hi-Fi Centre.
SOUTHAMPTON William Martin Photographic Services; J. F. Sutton.
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WORTHING Bowers & Wilkins Ltd.; The Music Shop.
YORK House & Son Ltd.



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This is a question we are being asked from all quarters of the globe. The answer is quite simply that real Hi Fi Stereo is worth while and it need not cost more than £100. While bad Stereo can sound like Monaural gone wrong, Hi Fi Stereo gives you just that little extra to complete the illusion that even while sitting by your own fireside you have the best seats in the concert hall. We propose to demonstrate our new Twin 20 Stereo Equipment at a special Hi Fi Stereo demonstration for which we have hired a room at the Imperial Hotel capable of seating about 100 people and we hope you will come and listen in comfort to this new Amplifier. My team and I, assisted by unique manufacturing facilities, have taken this job from Drawing Board to Test Bench via the usual channels of Press Tool Dept., Machine Shop, Transformer Shop, etc. Having produced High Fidelity Sound Equipment since 1931 we have ample experience, and we are very happy with this new Amplifier which together with its Tone Control Unit designed for use with the new Decca or equivalent type of pick-up and complete with two matched Phase Inverter Speakers costs only £87, or £50 for the Amplifier and Tone Control only. When you consider that this includes a Tone Control providing an 11-position Selector going from Mic to Tape including Stereo Radio with 5 Gramophone positions, separate Stereo switch, separate Mains switch plus Balance, Presence, Bass, Treble and Volume Controls, you will agree that we have spared no effort to provide a real Stereo Control Unit; add to this an Amplifier with attractive new styling which is precision wired and includes heavy duty mains and output Transformers using grain oriented steel. We believe that when you have heard this new Twin 20 in action you will think it sounds and looks worth considerably more. May we send you tickets? R. N. Wellington, *Managing Director*.



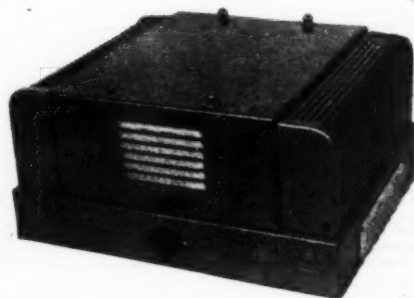
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Mr. Hartley would not want them to, but they need not worry—there is no hangover.

I enjoyed reading this book and it will become a useful reference. G.E.H.

Audio Measurements. Norman H. Crowhurst. Gernsback Library, No. 73.

This most prolific of technical writers has collected in one useful and reasonably sized volume a combination of reference and textbooks which covers the subject most thoroughly.

Commencing with a description of the test gear available (mostly in America) he describes in considerable detail how to check the performance of amplifiers, pre-amplifiers, output transformers, pickups and arms, turn-tables and auto-changers, tape recorders and microphones.

Few readers of *THE GRAMOPHONE* will wish to subject their equipment to the inquisition à la Crowhurst, but designers (and reviewers) will find much to interest them. G.E.H.

Loudspeakers. G. A. Briggs. 336 pp. Price 19s. 6d. Wharfedale Wireless Works Ltd., Bradford, Yorks.

A new book, or a new edition of an old one, by Mr. Briggs, is always an event in the audio world nowadays. This new, and almost completely re-written, fifth edition of his book on loudspeakers is no exception; and it is the same "mixture as before" of wit, good humour and technicalities that characterises all his books.

This means that it is an invaluable storehouse of information about the very large number of experiments on loudspeakers (and other things, including hot water bottles) that Mr. Briggs has conducted. I should say that he has been the most indefatigable empiricist in sound reproduction of our time. And he loves graphs; how he loves graphs! But equally, I surmise, he detests theoretical formulae, for I find him strangely reluctant to build up a philosophy or scientific theory of loudspeaker performance out of his experiments. Which is curious. His schoolboy enthusiasm for finding out *how* a thing works does not seem to have inspired him to inquire (at least not very effectively) *why* the thing should work that particular way and not in any other.

So, whilst his books can be relied upon to provide empirical answers on almost every question that has cropped up in the past about their subject matter, they should not be regarded as text-books building up, stage by stage, any scientific theories or technological principles of design.

In this book after two chapters of some 30 pages on personal history, Mr. Briggs recalls some of the history of loudspeaker design since the middle twenties. This, alas, is rather too short (10 pages) to be fully effective. How I wish writers on this subject would take the trouble to read through the pre-war volumes of *THE GRAMOPHONE*: they miss so much that is of value by not noticing things and ideas that did not "catch on" when they were first introduced: electrostatic speakers and piezo-electric tweeters are examples in point, but there are many others. And there were so many ideas in the twenties that were just before their time.

After this introduction, Mr. Briggs jumps straight into his subject with a highly informative chapter on Magnets; a short one on Chassis; and longer ones on Cones and Coils and Centring Devices. Then—a curious sequence, this, I find—chapters on Impedance and Phase Angle; Frequency Response; Quality and Distortion; Decibels and Phons; Volume and Watts; Power Handling and Efficiency; Cinema Speakers (why this should be inserted at this point I do not pretend to understand); Directional and Phase Effects; Resonance and Vibration; Baffles; Cabinets;

Horn Loading; Transients; Electrostatic Speakers; Cross-over Networks; Negative Feedback; The Ear; Room Acoustics; Stereo; Audio Fairs; Concert Halls; Sound Reproduction in Schools; Output Transformers; Questions and Answers; Conclusion.

This quotation of Chapter headings of itself seems sufficient to indicate the lack of any logical sequence and this I found rather disconcerting when I first read the book. Fortunately, I was familiar with the vocabulary and so knew what the author meant when he referred in earlier chapters to ideas or features of design (e.g. Vents), which are only explained later. But I did find myself disagreeing with statements, or at least being puzzled by them, until I came to the later descriptions.

I wish I had space to discuss many of the views and opinions and conclusions expressed by Mr. Briggs. For I find him both exciting and controversial. But that would take a book, and might even convey a false impression. My approach to the subject has been the exact opposite to that of Mr. Briggs: I started as a mathematician and physicist and my experiments have been conducted with physical and acoustic principles always in the forefront of my mind. Yet I find myself agreeing with Mr. Briggs far more often than I disagree or am doubtful. Perhaps it is significant that many more of the agreements relate to the older things and ideas than to the newer ones. I believe, indeed, in regard to the latter that Mr. Briggs is too hasty and is apt to come to conclusions on insufficient evidence. Otherwise, he would not appear so reluctant to stress the fundamental disability of the m/c cone loudspeaker, namely that it is essentially a resonant device, and to recognise the tremendous initial advantage of the electrostatic, the ribbon, and the Ionophone drives in this respect; and equally he would not be so hypnotised by the virtues (and they are very real) of concrete, brick, marble and sand in enclosure construction for they have no advantages where the travelling wave-fronts are normal to the conduit.

I hope no one will interpret this as being unkind, either to Mr. Briggs or to the book. For I have great admiration and respect for both,

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor does not necessarily agree with any views expressed in letters printed. Address: The Editor, THE GRAMOPHONE, The Glade, Green Lane, Stanmore, Middlesex.

Shostakovich Violin Concerto

I have seen your comment on the Shostakovich Violin Concerto, Op. 99, in which you ask whether Oistrakh has the sole rights or not (page 358, January).

May I take this opportunity of saying that there is no colleague in the world more generous in this way than Oistrakh. On two occasions, first in Prague in 1946, when he gave me a photostat copy of the Prokofiev Sonata for Violin and Piano, and again in November 1955, in New York, when he gave me a photostat copy of the Concerto in question, he was most eager that I play these works. Thus I gave the first performance of the Prokofiev Sonata in the United States, as well as the first performance of the Shostakovich Concerto in South Africa in October 1956, and again in Edinburgh this last September when I played it with Ernest Ansermet. I was able to return the courtesy with works by Bartók and Bloch, for which it is, of course, more difficult for Mr. Oistrakh to find the opportunity and the public in his own country than it is for us to play the Russian works in ours.

London, W.I.

YEHUDI MENUHIN.

and not the least because they positively invite argument and controversy.

It remains to be added that the book is beautifully printed on art paper, so that even diagrams are as well treated as blocks. There is an Index of three and a half pages.

I conclude as I began. This book will surely be regarded by everyone who is interested in the subject as an invaluable "Source-book".

P.W.

"B.G. Off The Record". By D. R. Connor. (Gaidonna Press, U.S.A. Available from Messrs. Dobell, 77 Charing Cross Road, London, W.C.1. 40s. 6d. post free.)

Books on individual jazz musicians and their records seem to be the latest and most salutary development in jazz literature. Anyway, I for one hope we get no more "histories of jazz", unless it is a book telling the truth about what really happened in New Orleans fifty years ago. The volume under review, dealing with the recording history of Benny Goodman, is a very readable and excessively useful document, listing in detail all the records that are known—as well as several only suspected—to contain the work of the erstwhile "King of Swing". Among the appendices there is one which details items that at various times have been attributed to Goodman but which are now known not to contain his playing, as well as another which attempts to evaluate in dollars many of the rare Goodman records.

The body of the book traces Goodman's career through the recording studios with minuteness and, in the main, considerable accuracy. Not being a Goodman collector myself, I should hesitate to challenge an author who has obviously studied his subject with devotion for many years; here and there, however, I did find myself wondering if B.G. really was present on some of the records ascribed to him. A few obvious errors have inevitably crept in, mainly concerning British catalogue numbers. There can be no doubt, though, that this book should be purchased by all collectors of white jazz, by many who prefer coloured jazz, and by everyone interested in the career of one of the finest musicians of our time.

O.K.

Hi-Fi: Is It Really Worth It?

To many of its enthusiasts Hi-Fi has been a disappointment; we had hoped that equipment reproducing sounds from 35-15,000 c/s would provide us with music which would be a joy to listen to.

Unhappily the restful smoothness of music as heard in the concert hall is often replaced by a harshness that makes sopranos scream, gives violins a steely cutting edge and woodwind a piercing quality. The result is a shrill aggressiveness which at anything like natural volume level becomes painful. The engineers, striving to give us everything from deep bass to the limit of audibility have lost much of the natural quality of the middle range. This distortion is the reason why critical listeners are being discouraged from Hi-Fi, and wives exasperate their Hi-Fi husbands by preferring the old-fashioned radiogram, which had nothing in the bass except harmonics and nothing at all above 5,000 c/s.

People vary in their sensitivity to this shrill quality. The enthusiast, indoctrinated by advertisements and technical articles, and biased by the thought of all the money he has spent is often unaware of it until the novelty of the latest equipment has worn off; then it creeps up on him. The engineer is even more biased, in fact many of them seem to be tone deaf if one may judge by the noises they so proudly demonstrate at the Audio Fair.

Recently there has been correspondence on this topic in *THE GRAMOPHONE* and elsewhere. The following are some of the views put forward: *Microphone technique*—Close-up microphone technique is held responsible for the shrill quality of the recorded soprano voice. *Recording technique*—Several correspondents have written that most records contain this distortion and the answer is to use tape. *Pickups*—Only in the most expensive pickups can the stylus follow the complex wave form. *Amplifiers*—One correspondent wrote that modern amplifiers using pentodes are responsible and the older Williamson amplifier using triodes was better. *Loudspeakers*—Cone breakup is held to be the reason.

So many opinions suggest that nobody really knows the answer. I suggest that doubtless more than one factor is responsible, but the biggest offender is the loudspeaker, since most cone loudspeakers I have heard have this shrillness to some degree. Only the Quad Electrostatic and the Goodmans 315 are free of it. The distortion is present from disc and radio; some discs are worse than others, due presumably to excess treble pre-emphasis. The distortion is not removed by switching out the tweeter and can be improved only by drastic treble attenuation, which, of course, reduces the higher frequencies too much.

I may be accused of being too critical. Hi-Fi is, of course, nowhere near perfection and price must cause us to make compromises. My complaint is that to many unbiased listeners much of the equipment even in the expensive class sounds actually worse than the bad old radiogram. We have concentrated on the wrong things and have in some ways made progress backwards. In my humble opinion as one who understands little of the technicalities, but has done his share of concert going and concert giving, the first essential is a clean, smooth middle range. Give me 100-5,000 c/s pure and undefiled; the rest can come after as the finishing touches. Full frequency range is all very well, but not at the expense of an undistorted middle range of frequencies.

R. P. C. HANDFIELD-JONES.
Haddenham, Bucks.

Editorial Note.—Though we think there is a clear answer to all the questions raised, we deliberately refrain from comment at present in the hope that other readers will be prompted to relate their experiences.

Vocal Recordings

A pity, the lovely soprano voice had to be the worst offender! The "zizz or comb and paper" effect, etc., of which Mr. C. T. Williams speaks in your December issue—and this seems to be the problem of Messrs. C. J. Briefer and M. and A. Bastow too—is produced by tweeters and wide range treble units. We never had this problem until the advent of these precious things. The source of the trouble however lies elsewhere: in low mains voltage. Hi-Fi amplifiers need to be fed with a constant voltage for 100 per cent efficient functioning, assuming, of course, that everything else in the link-up is perfect. Any drop in voltage below the mains tapping, and the sensitive top units begin behaving temperamentally like so many prima donnas! The wider their range the greater the nuisance they create. It would be proper to mention here that there is no point in investing large sums of money on treble units that go too high up the frequency scale. A moderately-priced unit by a good maker which gives a smooth delivery up to or slightly above 14,000 c/s is more than enough for the clear reproduction of every note on the high side in recorded music. I work two tweeters in a four-speaker system and experience the same problems your correspondents complain of.

The installation of an automatic voltage regulator set everything aright. There is no other remedy short of this. The proposition may seem a fairly expensive one after all the heavy initial outlay on good quality equipment, but who would grudge paying "that little extra" to enjoy the living presence of a great soprano voice right in one's room today?

RONALD ABHAYARATNA.

Dehiwela, Ceylon.

"Dished" Discs

As a fellow-sufferer with Mr. S. W. Sheward in the matter of "dished" records, I would suggest that the only solution to this problem is complete refusal on the part of the customer to accept any record found to be faulty in this way.

When ordering any new record I now stipulate that I will not take any disc which is either warped or "dished" and before handing over any money I ask to see the disc placed on a turntable. There is no need to play the record in order to ascertain whether it is badly shaped. If it is, I refuse it. This may entail some inconvenience, or even on occasion the loss of a desired recording, but it is surely worth while making a stand against such shoddy workmanship.

I am informed that a large percentage of recent records may be found to be "dished", and the only solution offered is that they should be laid flat for a long time in the hope that they will right themselves! There is, however, another solution—that which I have outlined above. If manufacturers are assured their goods will not be accepted in a faulty condition, they will most certainly take steps to overcome such faults.

Watford, Herts.

IVAN BUTLER.

Having read Mr. S. W. Sheward's letter on "dished" discs in the February issue, I am in absolute agreement.

Hi-Fi enthusiasts like myself, go to a great deal of trouble in levelling turntables, using dust bugs, etc. As Mr. Sheward says, what is the point of doing all this when the record companies continue to supply "dished" discs?

Modern audio equipment has made big strides over the years, much research has gone into better reproduction, and we are more "groove" conscious. But please, if we are to still improve, we certainly won't improve on "dished" records!

I think it would be a good start to this audio year of 1959 if the record companies took heed! London, S.E.2.

P. G. CHAPMAN.

Antonio Vivaldi

The craze for recording the works of Vivaldi and his lesser contemporaries shows no sign of abating. Going back as far as January, 1958, there is only one month (February) in which there is no Vivaldi disc reviewed in *THE GRAMOPHONE*.

Who buys all these records? The comparative uniformity of style of baroque instrumental music makes it hard for the non-expert to distinguish between one composer and another, yet still they come, often in batches of six or more; concertos for combinations of strings (mostly), with or without harpsichord continuo. I am far from indifferent to the charm of this music, but it is high time some of the work of more substantial merit, which remains unrecorded, was given a chance.

A few years ago Nixa enterprisingly issued a piano concerto by Hummel, a magnificent work, combining Chopinesque lyricism and a Mozartian strength of design. I still find this moving and exciting after many hearings. Then there is Spohr's Octet, with its entrancing instrumentation and charm of melody. These

composers and their contemporaries wrote a great deal of music, once famous, which would surely be more congenial to the modern listener than the monotonous strains of the average baroque concerto.

Tamworth, Staffs.

GEORGE LODGE.

Buried Treasure

Mr. Fagan's letter in the January issue must surely put readers in mind of their own gramophone discoveries. Of all the music with which I have personally become familiar through the medium of the gramophone, amongst the most rewarding has been the chamber music of Gabriel Fauré. Alas, recent LP deletions of several companies have swept so much away, leaving, I believe, only three major works: the two Violin Sonatas and the Piano Trio in the current catalogues.

The beautiful Parlophone recording by the Beaux-Arts Trio on PMC1035 is one of my most treasured discs.

We need good modern recordings of both the Piano Quartets, and the Piano Quintets also, in the catalogues. For myself, my copy of the Nixa recording of the First Piano Quartet serves; but this is no longer generally available.

It has been said that Fauré's favourite instrument was the piano—it features in nine of his ten major chamber works. There is at least one fine British pianist who excels in Fauré's music—Kathleen Long. Will no record company invite her to join with string players in the making of recordings of some of the most beautiful and remarkable chamber music ever to come from the pen of a French composer?

As regards other music, of the works which I personally discovered on records during 1958, Rachmaninov's Symphonies Nos. 2 in E minor and 3 in A minor (Steinberg on Capitol CTL7085 and Sargent on H.M.V. ALP1118 respectively) were among the most rewarding. Except in the columns of *THE GRAMOPHONE* little seems to be heard from music-commentators concerning these symphonies. Yet what splendid, stirring music they contain! Now on records we have several versions of both symphonies from which to choose. All credit is due to the gramophone industry for giving us an opportunity to get to know such magnificent music.

ALAN J. DICKMAN.

Woodston, Peterborough.

Simon Boccanegra

It was most gratifying to read for once a just appraisal of *Simon Boccanegra*. Mr. Shawe-Taylor's evaluation of this neglected opera is as penetrating as his review of the admirable performance. The fact is that, contrary to common opinion, *Boccanegra* is much more uniform in quality than the popular operas of Verdi's middle period: in *Rigoletto*, *Traviata*, *Travatore*, the decisive numbers of high inspiration are frequently contrasted with passages of painful banality. Nothing like this can be found in *Boccanegra*. Even the noisy and primitive march at the end of the Prologue serves a definite dramatic purpose.

I should like to correct one error: "the Bruno Walter-Carl Ebert *Macbeth*" should read, "the Fritz Stiedry-C.E. *Macbeth*". Fritz Stiedry not only conducted this memorable performance, but made an outstanding contribution to its success. He also conducted many splendid performances of *Simon Boccanegra*, *Don Carlos*, *Forza del Destino* and *Otello* at the Metropolitan Opera. As an equally accomplished conductor of Mozart and Wagner, he was a strong and steady musical pillar of the "Met" during the past dozen or so years.

THEODORE FRONT.

Beverly Hills, U.S.A.

Richard Standen

As there is such a dearth of outstanding English vocalists, I wonder why the fine voice of Richard Standen is not heard more frequently on records. Outside of the Scherchen *St. Matthew Passion* and a long play of Vaughan Williams' *Songs of Travel* and other English songs, which are splendidly sung and which I particularly cherish (not available in the U.K.—Ed.), there is practically nothing else of his in the catalogues. There is such a wealth of English song literature which should be recorded, and Standen would be an ideal interpreter of works such as Arthur Somervell's *Maud* cycle and songs of Frank Bridge, Warlock, Ireland, etc. etc. And will some kind company supply us with a recording of Constant Lambert's *Rio Grande* performed by people who understand the idiom?

Toronto, Canada. LOUIS A. CRERAR.

Jussi Björling

I wonder if recording companies are fully aware of their obligations to future generations of music lovers?

It will be an everlasting regret that Milanov was brought to the recording studio so late in her career. Another singer in point is Welitsch, of whose voice only recorded fragments remain. The same thing is apparently happening to Jussi Björling. Recently we have heard his recorded Duke of Mantua and Cavaradossi, and although his glorious voice, through his incredible musicianship and artistry, still retains its magic, it is regrettably not the young voice of his earlier recordings.

Among his Metropolitan performances he has included *Masked Ball* and *Don Carlo*. We are still without really satisfactory recorded performances of these operas. Is posterity to be denied the opportunity of hearing our greatest tenor in these roles?

His recent incomparable partnership with Los Angeles makes one hope for *Mefistofeles*, perhaps *Pearl Fishers*, and most certainly *Faust* and *Andrea Chenier*.

London, W.13.

H. J. CUBBIT.

Sir Adrian Boult

I am sure that Sir Adrian Boult's many friends will resent the remarks made about him in the article *Passing Notes* on page 422 of the February issue.

Sir Adrian has always put his services to music first, and his presence in London, Birmingham or any other place is guided by where he can help most. Music has gained in countless ways by what he has done in promoting this Art throughout the country, as it always does when the musician does not use it solely for his own advancement.

Bromley, Kent.

S. S. MOORE.

EDITORIAL NOTES

R.C.A. "Soria Series"

The names of Dario and Dorle Soria will be known to many readers, especially those in America, for their work on the E.M.I. Angel catalogue. This association terminated a year ago and now R.C.A. announce that the Sorias will be presenting a special gala series for them.

Of particular interest will be the projected recordings of the Oratorio and Opera *Messiah* and Gounod's *Romeo and Juliet* by Sir Thomas Beecham (both by arrangement with E.M.I.). *Messiah* will be recorded in London in June with the R.P.O., the soloists will include Jon Vickers and Giorgio Tozzi. The Gounoud work will be recorded later in the summer and the cast will include Jussi Björling.

Karajan and the Vienna Philharmonic will contribute an album of four records devoted to

the great composers identified with the musical life of Vienna and this will tie up with the world tour of Karajan and the orchestra scheduled this autumn.

Last January in London, Ansermet and the Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, recorded a two-record album entitled "The Royal Ballet—Gala Performances" which includes selections from eight popular repertoire works (*Nutcracker*, *Swan Lake*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Boutique*, *Coppélia*, *Giselle*, *Carnaval* and *Les Sylphides*). Finally, Reiner and Janigro will record Strauss's *Don Quixote* in Chicago in April.

These records will be available in both mono and stereo forms and will be issued in this country in due course on the R.C.A. label.

Puccini

In the December issue we expressed the hope that it would be possible to include this month an article by Mosco Carner on Puccini. Unfortunately, Dr. Carner is at present indisposed and it has therefore been impossible to include his article in this issue.

Columbia "Medea"

An English/Italian libretto for the Columbia *Medea*, reviewed on page 468, is now available from all Record Dealers or direct from E.M.I. Records Ltd., 8-11 Great Castle Street, London, W.1, price 6s.

New D.G.G. Series

A new D.G.G. 12-inch Classical LP series (prefix LPX) is to be introduced this month, priced at 20s. plus 7s. 10d. purchase tax. D.G.G. state that it is possible to introduce the series at the reduced price as, generally speaking, recording costs have already been met through issues made previously in other countries. It is understood that a number of the recordings will be new to this country.

Lanes Tape Recorder Club

Further to the announcement on page 440 of the February issue we are now advised that the Tape Recorder Club has changed its name to Lanes British Tape Recorder Club. All communications should be addressed to 123 Sutton Common Road, Sutton, Surrey. Details regarding Tape Recorder Centre of 73 Grand Parade, Harringay, remain as before.

Classical LP Catalogue

The March edition of the CLASSICAL LP CATALOGUE will be available by the middle of this month. It contains full details of all Classical LPs, MPs, EPs, standard 45s and Recorded Tapes currently available in this country. Copies are obtainable from your Record Dealer price 3s. 6d. or 4s. direct from the publishers at 49 Ebrington Road, Kenton, Harrow, Middlesex (annual subscriptions, four issues, 15s. 6d.).

Two Corrections

We have been advised by E.M.I. that the tenor part in the Mozart *Requiem* (reviewed last month) is sung by Helmut Krebs and not Josef Traxel as originally stated. Also, the reference on page 425 of the February issue to Jill Anderson should read Jill Adamson.

Fire at CQ Audio

Friday the thirteenth of February brought the unfortunate news that the premises of CQ Audio and Romagna had been damaged by fire. Production was anticipated to be delayed for fourteen days.

N.F.G.S. Conference

Further to the announcement on page 395 of the February issue, the above conference will be held at "High Leigh", Hoddesdon, Herts, from

April 10th-12th. The following items are included in the programme:

Friday, April 10th. 8 p.m., Opening of Conference. 8.10 p.m., Demonstration Recital by Acoustical Manufacturing Co. Ltd. (P. J. Walker).

Saturday, April 11th. 10 a.m., Recital of Folk Music (J. Bristow). 11.15 a.m., "Gramophones, Grammets and Gimmicks" (Percy Wilson). 2 p.m., "The President Reminiscences—Sir Adrian Boult. 5 p.m., "Record Sales—Four Points of View"—Representatives of the industry, the record clubs and the consumers. 8 p.m., "All the World's a Stage"—An anthology of poetry and music arranged and produced by the Southampton Gramophone Society.

Sunday, April 12th. 10 a.m., "Stereo and the Ordinary Man" (C. J. Neve). 11.15 a.m., "An Experiment in Sound" (Hugh Brittain and Dennis Humphries—G.E.C.). 2 p.m., "Pibroch, Mozart and All That" (A. Hutton). 5 p.m., "A History of Recorded Sound"—The illustrated story of the development of the gramophone by the Dulwich and Forest Hill G.S. 8 p.m., A Programme of musical films (Donald Aldous). 10 p.m., Closing of Conference.

FEDERATION AND SOCIETY NOTICES

The National Federation of Gramophone Societies will gladly supply information and advice concerning the establishment of new Gramophone Societies.

A sixty penny postal order sent to the Hon. Sec., Mr. C. H. Luckman, 41 Trinity Avenue, Enfield, Middlesex, will bring in return a circular of suggestions and many valuable hints.

The 1959 National Gramophone Conference will be held at High Leigh, Hoddesdon, Herts, from April 10th to 12th. Details from Hon. Conference Secretary, 100 Streetfield Road, Kenton, Harrow, Middlesex.

Notices for this column, which will appear again in the May issue, should be sent to Mr. G. H. Parritt, 31 Lynwood Grove, Orpington, Kent, on postcards, and should reach him not later than April 3rd.

Aldershot G.C. Meets in the Public Library, High Street, Aldershot, on the first Monday and third Tuesday each month at 7.30 p.m. Coffee during interval. Hon. Sec., Public Library, Aldershot.

Barrow G.S. Meets in the John Whinnerah Institute, Abbey Road, Barrow, on alternate Fridays at 7.15 p.m. Hon. Sec., 235 Abbey Road, Barrow.

Blackburn G.S. Fortnightly on Tuesday evenings at 7.30 p.m. in Room 4, Y.M.C.A., Blackburn, from March 3rd. Hon. Sec., 43 St. Albans Road, Darwen.

Bournemouth & District G.S. First Tuesday each month at Linden Hall Hydro, Christchurch Road, Bournemouth, at 7.30 p.m. Hon. Sec., 29 Haverstock Road, Bournemouth.

Bradford G.S. Alternate Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. in the Universal Bookshop, Sunbridge Road, Bradford. Hon. Sec., The Hollies, 10 Walmer Road, Bradford, 8.

British Nylon Spinners, Pontypool. Music Appreciation and G.S. meets on March 5th and 25th. Members of other Societies welcome. Hon. Sec., British Nylon Spinners Ltd., Pontypool.

Bushey & Watford G.S. Every Tuesday at The Galahad Room, Bushey & Oxhey Methodist Church, King Edward Road, Oxhey, at 7.45 p.m. Hon. Sec., 41 Holywell Road, Watford, Herts.

Chelmsford G.S. Alternate Mondays at 7.15 p.m. at St. Ced's School, Maltese Road, Chelmsford. March 2nd and 16th. Hon. Sec., 21 Pines Road, Chelmsford.

Chislehurst G.S. Alternate Tuesdays from March 3rd in Chislehurst Library at 8 p.m. Always something interesting. Hon. Sec., 48 Blannerlie Road, New Eltham, S.E.9.

Cinema Organ Soc. First Thursday each month, 6.30 to 10 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston. Refreshments available from 6 p.m. F.R.O., 179 Ardgoon Road, Catford, S.E.6.

City of London Phonograph & G.S. Second Tuesday each month at "Horse & Groom", Curtain Road, E.C.2, from 6.30 to 9.30 p.m. Hon. Sec., 49a Midmoor Road, Balham, S.W.12.

Dartford G.S. Weekly from October to April and fortnightly from May to September in the Reference Room, Central Library, Dartford, at 7.45 p.m. Hon. Sec., 12 Hazel Road, Dartford.

Derby R.M.S. Every Monday at 7.30 p.m. at Friends' Meeting House, St. Helen's Street, Derby. Hon. Sec., 4 Belper Road, Derby.

Dulwich & Forest Hill G.S. Church House, Jews Walk, Sydenham, S.E.26. Alternate Fridays at 7.45 p.m. Next meeting March 6th. Hon. Sec., 87 Broadfield Road, Catford, S.E.6.

Durham (City of) G.S. Alternate Wednesdays at Alington House at 7.30 p.m. Hon. Sec., 29 Maple Avenue, Durham.

Ealing G.S. Meetings at "Parkfields", South Ealing Road, W.5, at 7.30 p.m., Friday, March 13th, Thursday, March 26th. Hon. Sec., 9 Taunton Mews, Dorset Square, N.W.1.

Eastbourne G.S. Details of remainder of season from Hon. Sec., 10 Grange Gardens, Eastbourne.

East Ham G.S. Second Tuesday each month at Manor Park Methodist Church Hall, Herbert Road, E.12. Hon. Sec., 67 Wards Road East, Ilford, Essex.

Edinburgh G.S. Guest speakers for 1959 include Joseph Hishop, Evelyn Rothwell and Dr. Hans Swarowsky. Hon. Sec., 18 Hartington Place, Edinburgh.

Enfield R.M.S. First and third Friday in each month at Enfield Grammar School (Room 1) at 7 p.m. Hon. Sec., 88 Halstead Road, Winchmore Hill, N.21.

Epsom G.S. Hon. Sec., 31 Pound Lane, Epsom. Alternate Fridays in the Oak Room, West Hill House, at 7.45 p.m.

Felixstowe G.S. Alternate Thursdays throughout winter. Next meeting March 6th at 7.30 p.m., St. Peter's School Hall, Stanley Road. Hon. Sec., 40 Newry Avenue, Felixstowe.

Glasgow R.M.S. Meets at St. Andrews Society, 19 Ashley Street, Glasgow, at 7.30 p.m., fortnightly from March 13th. Hon. Sec., 58 Garfield Street, Glasgow, E.1.

Grimsby & District G.S. Fortnightly on Mondays from March 2nd at County Hotel, Brighowgate, Grimsby. Hon. Sec., 113 St. Helier's Road, Cleethorpes.

Guildford G.S. Every Tuesday at 7.30 p.m. in the Large Hall, Co-operative Society, Haydon Place, Guildford. Hon. Sec., "Lyndhurst", Thursley Road, Epsom.

Halifax & District R.M.C. This recently formed Society meets fortnightly on Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m. at 53 New Crown Street, Halifax, from March 4th. Hon. Sec., 22 Eton Street, Gibbet Street, Halifax.

Hammermith G.S. Fortnightly on Fridays at 8 p.m. in Westcott Road, W.6. March 13th and April 10th. Hon. Sec., 42 Ryelott Road, W.12.

Hampstead Contemporary Jazz Soc. Alternate Saturdays at Burch House at 7.30 p.m. from March 21st. Speakers include Johnny Dankworth and Ronnie Ross. Hon. Sec., 88 Haverstock Hill, N.W.3.

Henry Wood G.C. Every third Sunday from March 1st (St. Seraglio) in the Music Room, 4 Beulah Hill, S.E.19. at 6.45 p.m. April 12th, Handel Bi-centenary. Hon. Sec. at above address.

Ipswich G.C. Classical, every Friday (except Good Friday); Modern Jazz alternate Tuesdays from March 3rd. All meetings at 7.45 p.m. at Ritz Cafe, Buttermarket. Hon. Sec., 97 Burrell Road, Ipswich.

Kettering & District G.S. Alternate Wednesdays in the Common Room, Kettering Technical College, at 7.30 p.m. March 11th, First Anniversary, C.H. Luckman, Hon. Sec., N.F.G.S. Hon. Sec., Norwich Union, 6 Market Place, Kettering.

Leigh G.S. Alternate Mondays at 8 p.m. in White Hall, Clatterfield Gardens, Westcliff-on-Sea. Hon. Sec., 23 Leigh Gardens, Leigh-on-Sea.

Liverpool Phoenix G.S. Alternate Thursdays at 7.30 p.m. in Room 45, Bluecoat Chambers, School Lane, Liverpool, 1. Hon. Sec., 22 Burden Road, Moreton, Wirral, Cheshire.

Liverpool Recorded Opera Soc. Alternate Mondays, 7.30 p.m., V.W.C.A. Lounge, Slater Street, Liverpool, 1. March 9th, *Manon Lescaut*. Hon. Sec., 18 Charles Berrington Road, Liverpool, 15.

L.S.O. Club. Hon. Sec., 17 Everest Court, Motttingham, S.E.9. Meetings at New Chilterns Rooms, Chiltern Street, Baker Street, W.1, at 7.30 p.m., on March 3rd, 14th and 21st.

Manchester G.S. Hon. Sec., 3 Kingsley Avenue, Urmston, Lancs. Alternate Mondays at 6.30 p.m., International Club, 64 George Street, Manchester, 1 (behind Art Gallery). March 9th and 23rd.

North Manchester G.S. Fortnightly at Atlow Mount, Bury Old Road, Manchester, 8, at 8 p.m. Hon. Sec., 24 Davyhulme Road, Urmston, Lancs.

Nottingham The Record Club. 7.30 p.m. every Monday at Sherwood Community Centre, Mansfield Road, Woodthorpe. Hon. Sec., 27 Woodthorpe Drive, Nottingham.

Oldham G.S. Alternate Sundays at Werneth Park Study Centre, Werneth, Oldham. Hon. Sec., 16 Valley New Road, Royton, Oldham.

Orpington G.S. Alternate Mondays in Orpington Library at 7.30 p.m. from March 9th. April 6th at 7.30 p.m., Handel's "Solomon". Hon. Sec., 13 Hillcrest Road, Orpington.

Putey G.S. Meetings at 8 p.m. on alternate Mondays in "Crew's Cabin", Star & Garter Hotel, Putey Ridge, March 9th, Lionel Dunlop; March 23rd, Malcolm Macdonald. Hon. Sec., 6 Combemartin Road, S.W.18.

Quest M.G. (Bromley). Every third Saturday in Central Hall, London Road, Bromley, at 7.30 p.m. Live and recorded music. Hon. Sec., 120 Queen Anne Avenue, Bromley, Kent.

Reading G.S. Fortnightly on Tuesdays at Abbey Gateway, Reading, at 7.30 p.m. Hon. Sec., 237 Thirlmere Avenue, Tilehurst, Reading.

Recorded Vocal Art Soc. "The Green Man", Bedford Street, Strand, at 7 p.m. March 12th, Harold Rosenthal; April 9th, Lady Harry. Hon. Sec., 15 Chivelly Road, N.8.

Southampton & District G.S. Alternate Fridays at 7.30 p.m. at the Polygon Hotel from March 13th. Hon. Sec., Flat 5, Royal Southampton Yacht Club, Northlands Road, Southampton.

Southgate & District R.M.S. Second and fourth Wednesday each month at the "Hollies" Hall, Nursery Road, Southgate, at 7.30 p.m. Next meeting March 11th. Hon. Sec., 49 Dale Green Road, New Southgate, N.11.

Sussex G.C. Hon. Sec., R. P. Goodman, 45 West Street, Brighton. Alternate Tuesdays at Grosvenor House, Cannon Place, Brighton, at 7.45 p.m. March 10th and 24th.

Swindon Public Libraries G.S. First and third Mondays each month at 7.30 p.m. at the Arts Centre, Devises Road, Swindon. Hon. Sec., c/o Central Library, Swindon.

Thorpe Bay G.S. First, third and fifth Thursday each month at St. Augustine's Hall, Johnstone Road, Thorpe Bay, at 8 p.m. Chairman, 38 Branscombe Gardens, Thorpe Bay.

Torrey G.S. Fortnightly on Thursdays at Callards Cafe, Torquay, at 7.45 p.m. Hon. Sec., 38 Quinta Road, Torquay.

Uppminster R.M.S. Meets twice monthly. Hon. Sec., 34 Park Drive, Uppminster.

Verdi Soc. Fortnightly on Tuesdays, 7.30 p.m., at the Lecture Hall, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, 3. Speakers include Dymley Hussey and Ida Cook. Hon. Sec., 39 Sutcliffe Street, Liverpool, 6.

West Riding Opera G. (R.M.G.). Alternate Thursdays at Nether Green Hall (Headingley Congregational Church), Cumberland Road, Leeds, 6. Hon. Sec., 10 Gledhose Lane, Leeds, 8.

William Byrd Music Soc. Meets at 7.30 p.m. on alternate Mondays at North Road School, Southall. Refreshments. Next meeting March 9th. Hon. Sec., 15 Lodge Close, Cowley, Uxbridge, Middx.

Wimbledon & District G.S. Alternate Fridays at 7.45 p.m. in Wimbledon Community Centre, St. George's Road, March 13th and 27th. Hon. Sec., 223a Kingston Road, S.W.19.

Worthing R.M.C. Every Monday at 7.45 p.m. at Haverfield House, Union Place, Worthing. Hon. Sec., 33 Orient Road, Lancing.

"The Gramophone" Exchange & Mart

RATES.—Advertisements are accepted for this section at the rate of sixpence per word, with a minimum charge of 6s. Where the advertiser offers to send a list or requests a stamped addressed envelope, this will be treated as Trade and charged at the rate of ninepence per word. If a Box Number is used an extra 2s. 6d. should be added to the cost; this includes the forwarding of replies. Letters to Box Numbers should be posted to "Office" address as stated below. All advertisements (copy in block letters or typewritten) should arrive by the 8th of any month and must be prepaid by the form of postal orders or cheques addressed to Messrs. General Gramophone Publications Ltd., 7 Charlotte Street, London, W.1. The Proprietors retain the right to refuse or withdraw "copy" at their discretion and accept no responsibility for matters arising from clerical or printers' errors or of an advertiser not completing his contract.

RECORDS FOR SALE

A BACH HARPISCHORD CONCERTO to the Flagstad Walküre set! A worth-while recommended list (all excellent copies) is again available.—B. J. Records, 89 Kings Road, Surbiton, Surrey.

A BARGAIN SPRING SALE OF LP RECORDS.—(1) An interesting, comprehensive selection of LP's MP's 45's, in guaranteed perfect condition at substantial savings on new prices. (2) Older issues and imperfect copies at extremely low cost; ideal for educational and club use. (3) New LP's, monaural and stereo, with following advantages: Every British issue, post/packing free; inner and outer polythene; guaranteed copies, readily exchanged if not 100%; your perfect LP's accepted in part-exchange at generous prices; educational discount to student bodies; and personal service with advice if wanted. A postcard or phone call brings our large free catalogue by return, with details of our entire stock, part-exchange schemes, and prompt and safe postal service to all U.K. addresses. Finest selection and h.f. equipment supplied against your perfect LP's. Post-war "Gramophones" and 78 albums, cheap to clear.—K. S. Holman, 143 Greenway, Ickenham, Middlesex (Ruislip 2518).

A BRAND NEW LIST.—All guaranteed perfect. Including Bohème (Calder), Falstaff, Lippatti, Amadeus, etc. Some stereos.—G. D. Melvin, 6 Derby Street, Glasgow G.3. Western 8133.

ALWAYS A LARGE SELECTION of perfect condition second-hand LP's for sale at Chelsea Record Centre, 303 King's Road, S.W.3. FLA 2396.

AMERICAN LP's. unobtainable here, latest Broadway musicals, as new. And wanted: old Mass Weats.—KEN 5220.

ANGEL-BACK COLLECTION. Melba (1904), some original sleeves, Caruso, Patti (autographed), etc. Excellent playing condition.—50 Oakington Manor Drive, Wembley.

BEETHOVEN SONATA SOCIETY (Schnabel recordings). Vols. 3 (7 records), 5 (7), 6 (7), 7 (7), 8 (7), 9 (6), 10 (6), 12 (6), 13 (7), 14 (7), 15 (7), total 74 records, all in good condition. In cases where with foreword by Eric Blom. Best offer accepted.—Wyatt, 4 Park Avenue, Birmingham, 19.

CINEMA ORGAN and Brass Band Collection. over 5,000 recordings, mostly LP, 78 r.p.m. and tapes. Books, catalogues and magazines in cinema organ. Many large framed photos. Model console in display case. Many U.S.A., Australian and continental issues. List wants please.—Box No. 1032.

CONTES D'HOFMANN (Cluytens) £3 15s.; Smetana/Kodaly Quartets, LXT2478, 27s. 6d.; "Petrouchka (Ansermet) LXT2502, 14s.—Box 1018.

EVERY TASTE catered for. Large list of LP's in varying condition from Tredwell, Heathfield, Plumley, Cheshire.

FOR SALE.—Celebrity vocals. Collection early D.A. DB, etc., many G. & T., Victor and early electrics. Wanted Elizabeth Schumann H.M.V. and Teyte Decca.—Eric Bernadine, Longridge 1018.

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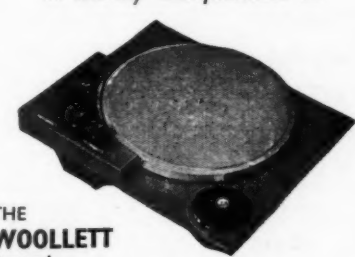
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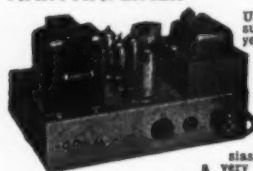
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- (d) As in (c) above but the TYPE "C" supplied as COMPLETE KIT OF PARTS... (Carriage and Insurance on above quotes 10/- extra) £39.10.0

BUILD YOUR OWN RECORDER... WE OFFER

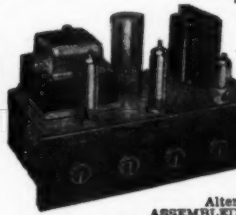
- (a) THE HF/TR3 AMPLIFIER and P/UNIT, fully assembled with the TRUVOK TAPE DECK incorporating PRECISION REV COUNTER... ALTERNATIVELY as above but Amplifier and P/UNIT as KIT OF PARTS £21 10 0
- (b) THE HF/TR3 AMPLIFIER and P/UNIT, fully assembled with the NEW COLLARO MK. IV TRANSCRIPTION TAPE DECK... ALTERNATIVELY as above, but the Amplifier and P/UNIT as KIT OF PARTS £26 0 0

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Please INCLUDE 12/6 to cover most of carriage and insurance.
HIRE PURCHASE and CREDIT SALE TERMS are available on all equipment (excluding Kits of Parts). Send S.A.E. for details. NOTE... The Deck switches of the Transcriber have to be "wired-up." We will complete this wiring for use with either the HF/TR3 or the HF/TRIP for an extra charge of £1-0-0.

MULLARD'S 2-STAGE PRE-AMPLIFIER TONE CONTROL UNIT

A completely new design employing two EF86 Valves, and in particular designed to operate with the Mullard range of Power Amplifiers, but also perfectly suitable for other makes, etc. Briefly it incorporates:
• Equalisation for the latest R.I.A.A. characteristics.
• Input for variable reluctance Magnetic Pick-ups
• Input for Crystal Pick-ups.
• Input for Tape replay.
(a) Direct from High Impedance Tape Head.
(b) From a Tape Amplifier or Pre-Amplifier.
• Sensitive Microphone Channel.
• Wide range BASS and TREBLE Controls.
• Our Kit is strictly to MULLARD'S SPECIFICATION
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Only new high-grade components and Mullard valves are supplied with these kits—we do not use "Surplus or Cheap" components.



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Devoted from the very popular 3-valve 3-watt Amplifier designed in the Mullard Laboratories. Our kit is complete to the Mullard specification, including supply of specified components new Mullard valves and a PARMEKO OUTPUT TRANSFORMER. We also include switched inputs for 78 and LP records plus a Radio Tuning Unit. Extra power to drive a Radio Tuning Unit is provided.

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DUAL-WAVE, HIGH-Q
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RECEIVER KIT

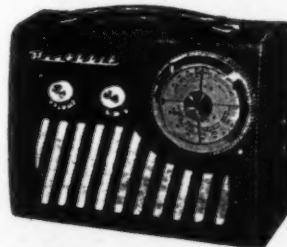
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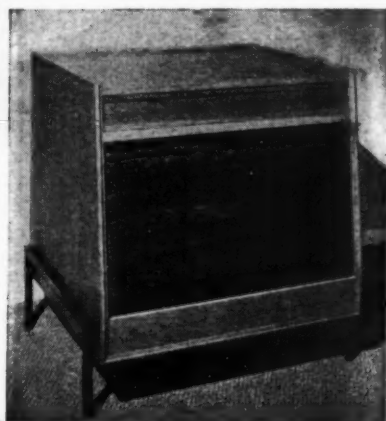
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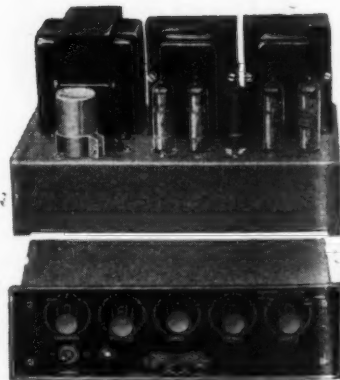
Twin-channel amplifier and pre-amplifier for reproducing monaural and stereophonic sound from disc, radio and compensated tape. Ultra linear push/pull output giving 7.5 watts peak from each channel.

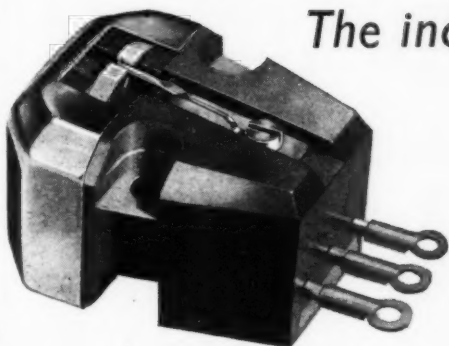
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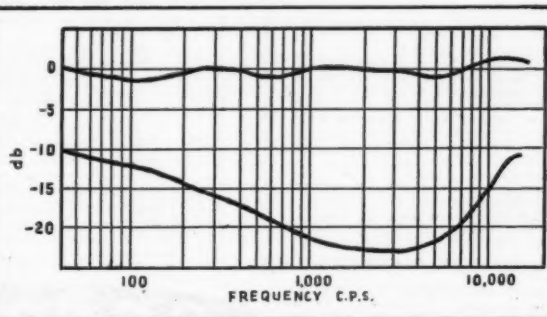


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STYLUS DIMENSIONS: .0005
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STANDARD $\frac{1}{4}$ " MTG. CENTRES.

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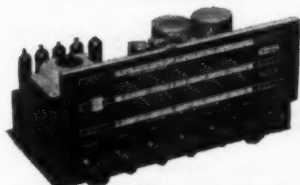
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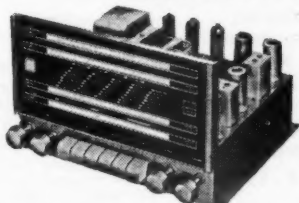


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A stereo and monaural chassis providing 8 watts output, 4 watts on each channel, and covering the full VHF and medium wavebands. Stereo and monaural inputs for tape playback and all types of crystal pick-ups and a tape output for stereo and monaural tape recording. Separate wide range bass and treble ganged controls together with dual volume control for ease of balancing. FM and AM tuners and two separate amplifiers on one compact chassis.

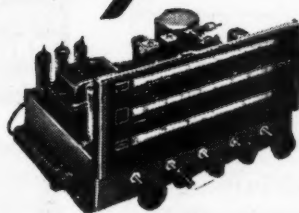
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BUILD YOURSELF A HI-FI TAPE RECORDER.
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The above two items at a special price of £29/17/6. Carr. and pkg. 22/6 the two units.

BUILD YOURSELF A HI-FI TAPE RECORDER

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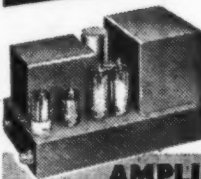
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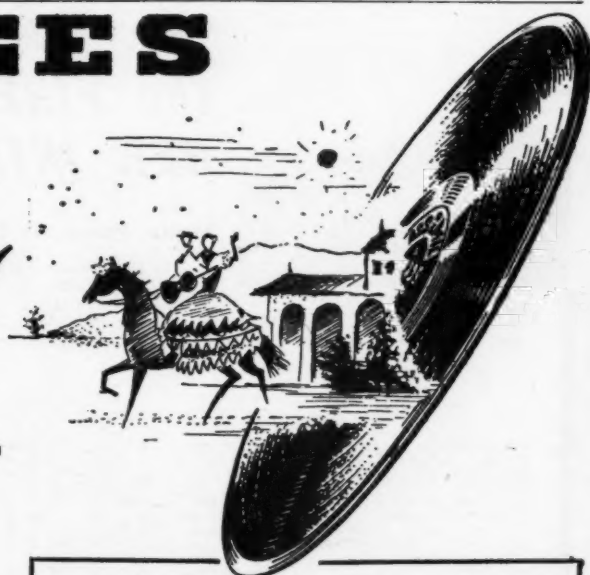
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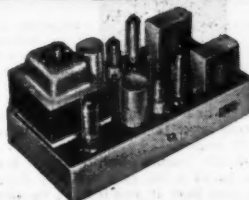
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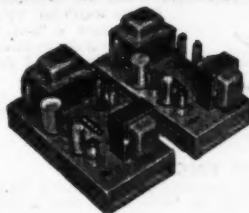
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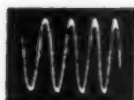
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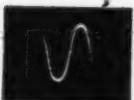
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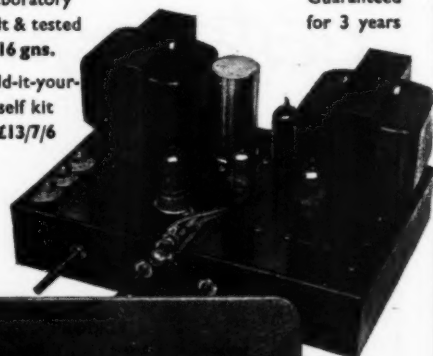
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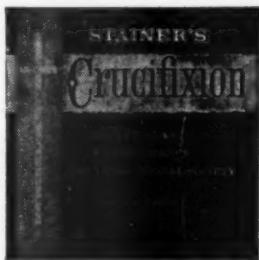
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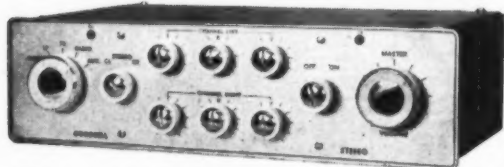


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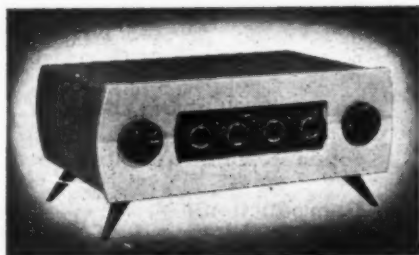
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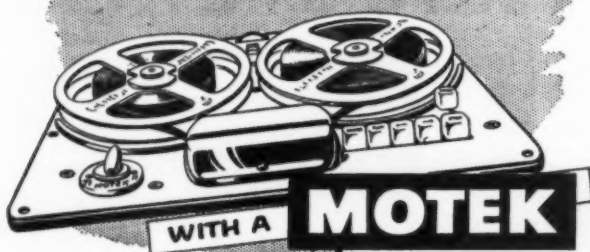
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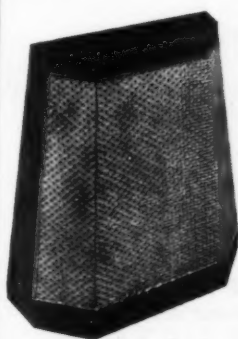
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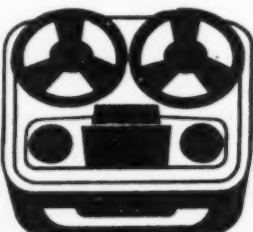
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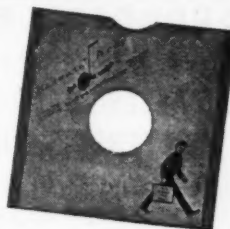
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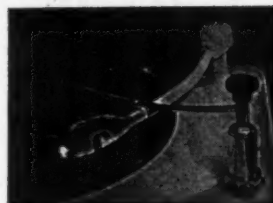
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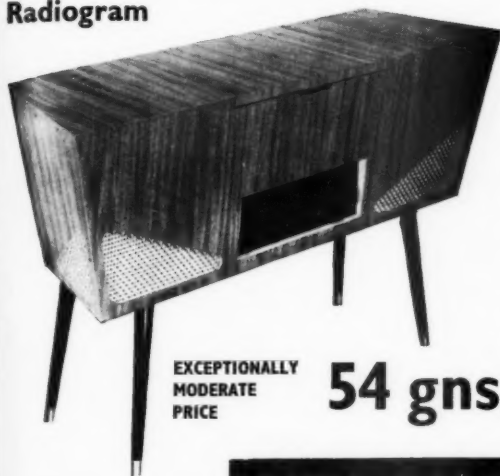
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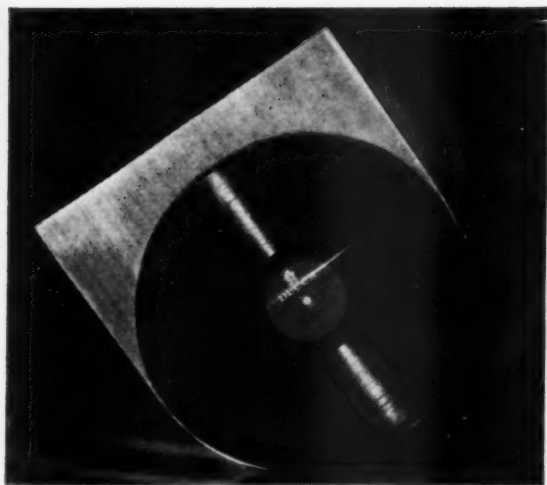
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